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(Tocqueville & others)

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"My Brother & I"

an Interview with

Clive Sinclair

Edited by Melvin J. Lasky & Anthony Thwaite

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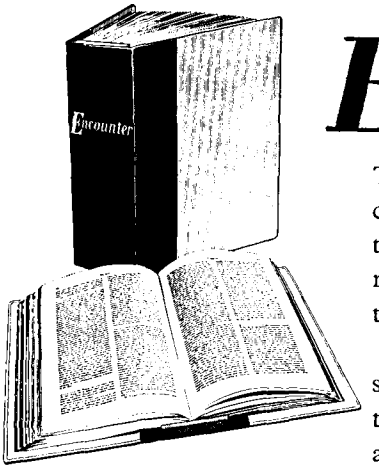

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Masuji Ibuse

White Hair

MY HAIR HAS been turning whiter lately. The top has been thinning out, but the hair at the back is thick and so tough that it bristles. Each strand of hair at the back must be three times as thick as the hair on my forehead, and the thickness of the hair in my sideburns, somewhere in between.

It is the considered opinion of the proprietor of the Sunrise Fishing Supply Shop on Eighth Street in Ogikubo that my white hair is about as thick as four strands of fishing gut. He's just making a rough guess from his cursory observations, since he's never actually pulled out a strand and had a close look. But Uokin, the owner of a fish market and himself a regular patron of Sunrise Fishing Supply, made a more detailed analysis when he actually pulled out a strand and measured it against a strand of fishing gut, mulling over his data with the aid of a magnifying glass. According to the results of his study, the white hair on the back of my head is as thick as four and a half strands of gut, the white sideburn hair equals three and a half strands of gut, and the white hair on top precisely three strands. Since I comb my hair straight back, an amateur fisherman would think all my hair looks the same as an authentic three-strand gut.

I find myself getting depressed pretty often these days. I try and get myself to do some work, but all I do is sit here, chin in my hands, and stare out into space. When that happens, I start pulling out strands of hair from my forehead and find that before I realise what I'm doing, I've tied them together. I don't even use a mirror, just run my fingers through my hair, search out a strand and then yank it out. Sometimes, when I'm unlucky, four out of five strands turn out to be black. Then again, there are times when out of six strands, four are white, or out of two strands, both are black. There's just no way of telling. These figures seem to indicate that I'm actually after black hair, not white. In fact, it's strange that while I tell myself I'm trying for a white hair, in my heart it's a black one I want.

When I do pull out a black hair, I just blow it down the hall and let it waft outdoors along with the breeze from my fan. White strands, I collect in groups of four or five under my cigarette lighter and tie together in order of thickness, fastening them with the one simple fisherman's knot I know how to make. Since hair, gut, and nylon are all elastic and have slippery surfaces, a regular knot would untie right away and when I'm not careful, the strands sometimes do split or slip out. There are, of course, many ways to tie gut, but I use the ordinary method I learned from an old fisherman. The very easiest knot is the fisherman's knot. I twist the tip of a white hair into a circle and put another white hair through it to make one knot. Then I twist the top of the second hair into a circle and slip the end of the first hair through it to make another knot. Then when I pull at it from both sides, the two loops contract a bit, knotting firmly. I cut off the leftover strands with a scissors and discard them.

Another method of knot-tying is known as the double knot, or artificial knot, as it is sometimes called, but this one requires much more diligence. Knotting a white hair the width of three guts can be a lot of trouble, and when I'm tying three or four of them together, I can feel my patience running out. There is also the knot called the wisteria knot which I prefer to use when I go trout-fishing. People who live way up in the mountains use it to tie up wisteria vines. While I'm trying to fasten my white hair with this knot, I often recall the times I've spent fishing along those mountain streams.

But the thought of those streams can make

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my blood boil for I also start thinking of a very painful incident. I don't think I'm exaggerating when I point to that occasion as the time when my most generous intentions got crushed to bits. Yet no one would ever take me seriously if I went into the details.

IT ALL STARTED at the end of June or the beginning of July last year. Since my return to Tokyo was imminent, I went to visit a shrine in a valley around Yotsukawa, the neighbouring village. When I had gone to this shrine about thirty years back, there had been an oil dish blackened with grease and a sake bottle under the eternal lamp. At the time, they didn't interest me particularly, but, in retrospect, my mind sometimes turned to those bits of pottery. I spoke with my friends about the possibility that the two pieces had been crafted in Bizen, but I just never felt the desire to go back and look at them. During the war, when we had fled from the city, I sometimes went to Yotsukawa to fish, but it never struck me to go and look at that shrine. When we finally decided to move back to Tokyo, I suddenly made up my mind to go and see it, since in all likelihood I wouldn't be coming to Yotsukawa again.

Dedicated to the rice god or the Buddha of healing, the shrine, almost entirely fallen into disrepair, stood in a grove of cedars. To the side, close to the cedars, was a granite lamp. In contrast to its appearance thirty years ago, the shrine now looked so extremely small that I wondered whether my eyes weren't deceiving me and that I had come to the wrong place. There was no oil dish or sake bottle, only an unglazed plate, black with grime and coated with beetle wings.

But this isn't the painful experience I wanted to tell you about.

ON MY WAY BACK from my visit to that lamp, I was hailed by two young boys I didn't recognise, near the earthen bridge of Yotsukawa. One of them wore a short-sleeve shirt, second-hand army pants, a white mountain climber's cap and carried a knapsack. The other boy wore a blue shirt with the shirt-tails hanging out, white pants, and also a white mountain climber's cap, and he held a fish basket and a bag of fishing rods. From the looks of them, they didn't seem like bad sorts, although the sun-glasses of the boy in the short-sleeve shirt did make me uneasy. But I was favourably impressed by the tone he used when he said to me, "A mile must be almost twice as long in the country! They told us all we'd have to do is walk two and a half miles and so we got off the train and have been walking ever since. Now we're ready to drop. We can't even sit down and eat lunch since there isn't even a place where we can get some tea, is there? Do you know of any well near here?"

Then the boy in the shirt-tails took this chance to add his complaint.

"There are so many plum and persimmon trees planted everywhere along the river bank, that there's not one spot left where I can cast my line. I've been searching all over for a place to fish but the trees got in the way everywhere I looked. I'm annoyed at not finding a good spot. I suppose they've planted those trees to fortify the banks during the floods."

It was true that instead of stone walls they had planted a mixture of plum, persimmon, fig, and loquat trees all along the river banks, but I had never heard until now that they were there to form a protective wall.

I'D GONE FISHING in this mountain stream many times, so I knew that the big fish always lingered around the deep water below the bridge. I had also learned that if you fish with slender gut in the lower pool of the rapids, without driftwood floats or lead sinkers, you must proceed very quietly. These two fishing holes I had told no one about, but I convinced myself that since it was hardly likely that I'd be fishing here again, there would be no harm in guiding these two strangers there. The chances were that a long time would pass before they would come this way again. I led them first to a fresh-water well and joined them in eating my lunch.

The well was below the bank, a spot untouched by sunlight the whole day long. The boy in the sun-glasses took some food from his backpack and before he began to eat he used his knife to whittle two pairs of chopsticks out of a piece of bamboo he cut down from the grove. Then he produced a bottle of whisky from his knapsack, along with two aluminium cups, and he and the boy in the shirt-tails

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proceeded to serve themselves. They munched rice cakes and fish on the side. I went to the well, lay down on my stomach, put my mouth to the water and quenched my thirst. Then I ate my lunch of rice balls wrapped in bamboo.

A breeze blew round the well and cooled the air. While the two boys drank their whisky, I gave them a minute description of the fishing spot. They did not offer me any whisky, but I got enough satisfaction out of hearing the sound of my own voice so that I wasn't bothered. I went to the trouble of pointing to each spot as I gave them the details.

"My secret fishing hole is below the bridge near that plum tree straight across from us. At that spot, the stream has the three ideal conditions for fishing—it is shallow, swift, and then deep. The fish are usually in the swift part and wait for the bait to come floating down from the shallow end. Since the current is pretty fast, they are likely to stay to the side of the rapids. If you miss catching a fish or make the slightest sound, the fish will race away to the deep end. So you must let your bait flow very quietly from the shallow end. The best method I know of is to let your line out as far as it will go into the depths of the river, even if you don't have a bite. Then lift your pole up gently as though you have a strike. This way, you'll always land one, I promise you. The only problem is that there are many of those low-lying plum branches, so if you aren't careful, the tip of your pole will brush against them or the fish you've just landed might get caught in the plum branches and dangle by the line. What you should do then is to use the back of the pole as a fulcrum. You put the pole at an angle and bend it upwards in the opposite direction from the one the fish is pulling at. While you are busy measuring the pull of the fish, it's crucial that you make sure not to get the tip of your pole caught on a branch."

My spirits rose as my explanation proceeded.

"Last month when the water was slightly muddy, I caught more than ten big fish there."

The boy in shirt-tails was drinking his whisky and didn't utter a word. His face turned deep red from the effects of the liquor. The short-sleeve shirted boy, his face pale, listened to my talk. I kept up a running commentary about the fishing spot until they had finished their lunches and then I led them to the site.

I ESCORTED THEM to the foot of the earthen bridge. The two of them began to get their equipment out when the boy in the shirt-tails announced that he had forgotten an essential item—the gut.

"It must have happened while I was fiddling around with the equipment. I must have left them on the pile of cargo at the depot when we were waiting to transfer at Kannabe station. The gut must be still sitting there on the platform. This all happened because they made us wait a full hour for our transfer."

The boy in the short-sleeve shirt said, "Don't blame me. I was standing at the exit to the overhead passageway, chatting with that Tomiko from Ihara."

He was obviously upset and dissociated himself from the matter.

"I don't know a thing about it. No use telling me at this point. I introduced Tomiko to you and then I walked her to the exit, while we gossiped about you. You seem to have caught her fancy."

"I know absolutely nothing about that. All I know is that you two were gabbing for so long that I got bored and started to put together my fishing gear."

"We can't fish without gut, can we?"

"I only have the lines", said the boy in shirt-tails, searching in his fish basket. "I have the lines and the sinkers. Also the wooden floats and the bait and the hooks. I just left the hooks with the flies and the bunch of gut behind."

The boy in shirt-tails emptied out his pants pockets one more time, but the only thing he found was a cellophane bagful of peanuts. Making a sour face, the short-sleeved boy sat down on a flat rock on the side of the river. Using the knapsack he had placed on his knees for support, he rested his chin on his hands and glared out at the plum trees on the far bank.

His face full of silent threats, he seemed to demand that we help him.

"Can't we use the lines instead of gut?" asked the shirt-tailed boy in a voice of great timidity, while still searching through his pockets.

"My line is quite thick, since I thought the currents here would be rough, so we can't use it instead of gut. What a stupid thing to do—when you went and bought the gut. But anyway, I'll buy more gut and return it to you later."

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"What are you talking about? What good is it to us later? Why don't you just try opening your mouth like that again?"

The boy in the short-sleeve shirt turned about to face the shirt-tailed boy and took his sun-glasses off. He was just going through these motions for the effect. However, he didn't get up. In the first place, this narrow road atop the river wall was no place for a fight: just one false step and they would both land in the river. The shirt-tailed boy's red face paled. A look of prudent submission seemed to cross his face as he silently cast his eyes down upon the river.

I felt I had been put in a position where I had to speak, but warned myself to choose the words carefully. In an attempt to brighten things up a bit with some harmless chatter, I addressed myself to the boy in the shirt-tails.

"At home I have more than twenty lines, some three guts thick and some eight guts thick. It certainly is a shame I can't offer them to you boys, since my house is on the other side of the mountain. Of course, you won't find any place near here where you can buy gut. The children in this village usually fish with cotton thread. I myself have been experimenting with various kinds of fishing lines since my childhood, and when I began primary school I sometimes used white hair from a horse's tail in place of gut. When the driver wasn't looking, I would race over to the white horse and steal a hair—a simple solution, but dangerous. Had the driver caught me, he would have given me a real bawling out, or, what would have been worse, the horse might have reared up and kicked me. I saw my chance when the driver paused for a drink at the sake shop. I would sidle up at an angle to the back of the horse and throw some sand at his rear. Thinking that some fly or other had lit on him, he would swish his tail and in that split second I would grab hold of the end of his tail and pull out a strand, before he knew what was happening. The trickiest part of this was to develop the correct touch so that I wouldn't pull out three or four strands at once. It's the same technique you need to pull out human hair."

This was the gist of my talk.

The boy in the shirt-tails had a bored expression on his face, but the one in the short-sleeve shirt put on his glasses as soon as I finished speaking and said, "This fellow never stops talking, does he? It's a never-ending babble. You just never quit, do you?"

I FELT THESE WORDS were undeserved in the light of the friendly advice I was offering them. But I couldn't come up with a quick retort and became flustered, removing my mountain climber's cap to wipe the sweat from my brow. A look of hatred had transformed the countenance of the boy in the sun-glasses.

"Hey you, old man, how about using your white hair instead of the horse's? Didn't you just say that it's exactly the same technique as pulling out human hair?"

Almost by reflex, I quickly put my cap back on my head. The boy in the short-sleeves stood up and even though I cried, "Hey wait! Be careful! We're going to fall!" he grabbed me. Afraid that if I struggled, we would fall into the water, I couldn't make any move to loosen his hold. If he lost his footing, we'd both go over.

"Cut out the joking! Stop this nonsense!" I said, urging him to reconsider what he was doing. "Stop this violence! If you're really a fisherman, then you should behave like one."

"Why do you think I'm asking for some of your white hair? Don't make such a fuss—give us a few strands."

"You're a thief. I'll shout for help if you don't let me go."

He turned me round without difficulty, holding me firmly from the back with both hands. But I thought better about crying out for help. My friend Sazen lives near here and there's the doctor in Sazen's clinic my family and I often consult who is also my close friend. I could see the white storehouse wall of Sazen's house above the stone wall at the foot of the mountain opposite and the hospital annex on the left. Looking at the peaceful scene made me feel even sorrier for myself. On the one hand, I wanted to yell out for help, but on the other, I didn't want anyone to find me in this degrading situation. It would be mortifying to have people think I'd been engaged in a scuffle at my age. But I had no intention of keeping silent and giving this hoodlum free rein.

"Listen, I'm going to call for help!" I managed to mutter softly. "You're just like one of those sadists who like to torture flies by holding them by their wings. You've got that same kind of cruel mentality."

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"Why don't you just hold still?" he said, painfully tightening his grip on me, and instructing the boy in shirt-tails who stood in front of me.

"Koro, pull out some of this old coot's white hair. It's about four guts wide—we're in luck. You needn't have a guilty conscience about it either—after all, he called me a 'thief', didn't he?"

From the first, Koro, the boy in the shirt-tails, didn't seem too enthused about all this.

"You really want to go through with it?" he asked in a lackadaisical voice.

And then, he nonchalantly lifted off my cap and grabbed hold of the back of my head with one hand and pulled out one strand of hair from my forehead. He made as if to shove it in his pocket, but then held it in his teeth. His face was a few inches away from mine—a face drained of all emotion. For some reason this filled me with disgust. He and the hooligan behind him both reeked of liquor, but their behaviour couldn't be entirely blamed on the alcohol. What they were doing was far more reprehensible.

Koro pulled out three strands of my hair and was about to continue when he said, "How many more do you think I should pull?"

"That's enough!" I said.

"Thirty should be enough", said the hooligan in the rear. "His hair's dry and might break. Better get some extra to be on the safe side."

Koro had started to act like a hoodlum too. In spite of my steady glare, he kept on plucking out hair after hair without the slightest trace of remorse. He was obviously the same breed of unfeeling ruffian as his friend. He never once wasted a move and mistakenly pulled out a black hair.

By my count he most certainly pulled out thirty-five strands. . . .

EVERY TIME I think about this experience, I get upset. If this hadn't happened last summer, I probably would have put off my return to Tokyo for a bit and stayed to do some fishing. But as it was, I couldn't bear the sight of that stream, nor the sound of the rippling water.

One month ahead of schedule, I set out for Tokyo.

During the course of our evacuation during the war, we had first moved to the suburbs of Kōfu for more than a year, then for about two and a half years to my home town in Hiroshima, all together about three and a half years. In all that time, I suffered no personal experience as devastating as when those boys plucked out my hair.

When the short-sleeve shirted hooligan let me go, he spoke to me scornfully, "Old man, you should learn a lesson from this and dye your hair. Good grooming is all-important, you know."

This hoodlum's pal, the one in shirt-tails, turned towards his companion and chimed in, "But don't think good grooming stops there. To look just so, they say you must also tweeze out the white hair in your nose, a job I understand wives do."

The boy in the short-sleeve shirt once again spoke to me in a voice full of menace, "Did you hear that, old man? I'll bet your old lady pulled them out for you. But I'd give that up if I were you. Dyeing your hair would suit you better."

When I crossed the bridge on my way home, I came out on the road on the other side of the river, and I looked at the two of them on the river bank in the distance. I wasn't trying to discover if my white hair served well as a substitute for gut, nor did I want to see whether I could reach the river if I threw a stone their way. I gazed over in that direction, rehearsing the torrent of scathing words I would shower on them. But I soon realised that even if I shouted at the top of my lungs, they wouldn't hear a thing.

EVERY TIME I think of it, my stomach churns. If someone just happens to make a casual remark like, "Look, how your hair's turning white!" a chill always runs down my spine. But despite my indignation, I didn't breathe a word of it to anyone until June of this year. It was on the opening day of the trout season, while I was on the bus going from Itō to Kawazuhama in Izu, that I spoke of the incident for the first time to an elderly man sitting next to me. Like the pre-war fishermen, he wore black leggings, straw sandals, and carried his rod in a bag, along with a box

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of bait and a net bag. He seemed to be about ten years my senior and had jet-black hair. Since it didn't look as if it had been dyed, I had no qualms about telling him the story.

Upon completion of my tale, he commented, "Actually, my hair is also completely white. I decided to dye it quite recently. I stopped working during the war, but I've started to work again."

After he said this, he changed the subject completely, seemingly reluctant to discuss white hair.

When the bus had made its way over a road atop a cliff, and was passing through a field, the old fisherman next to me suddenly recommenced talking.

"There are many elderberry trees around here. The flowers are all in bloom—spilling over everywhere you look, if you see what I mean. What is that flower over there?"

He pointed his finger at the paulownia which had been planted here and there in a grove of trees.

"Pretty, aren't they? Very pure looking, I think. I wonder how they would look in a garden. Those are really pretty ones."

The old fisherman went on with his admiration, then abruptly switched topics.

"To get back to what you were saying. Your white hair, even if it is the width of three strands of gut, do you think they could have landed more than a four-inch dace with it? Those two louts must have lost it for sure. You can at least console yourself with that."

"Last August, I caught an eight-inch dace in that stream with a three strand nylon line", I said, while fingering the hair on my head. "We have to compare the elasticity of nylon and my white hair. But even with my white hair, they could probably catch a four-inch dace."

I deftly pulled out one strand of my white hair. My companion put on a pair of thick-lensed spectacles he took from his pocket, and after taking the white hair from my hand, he rubbed it with his finger and pronounced, "Very strong hair, you have. With this quality, they could have caught a four-inch dace. You say you met these louts at the end of last June, which is not when the fish are biting hardest. But the elasticity of hair is closely related to diet."

"After I returned to Tokyo, and even when I was living in the country, I didn't eat very fancy food. I've been drinking more since I came back to Tokyo."

"Whether you drink or not will also have a big effect on your hair—a most important effect."

Without waiting for my response, he added, "I am, of course, speaking in general. Even on the very same person, depending upon whether he is drinking or not, there is a lot of variety in the strength of his hair."

My companion, reading confusion on my face, said, "I, of course, am not speaking of the relationship between your drinking and your white hair. I was reminded of a story."

So saying, he began to speak of killifish.

THIS OLD FISHERMAN had started out when young as a carp fisherman, switching temporarily to killifish when he was about forty years old, and then changing to trout, an interest which continues to this day. There is no disputing the fact that if you want to fish for tiny fish, you just can't beat killifish. He was attracted to them, in his words, "For the fun of losing myself in the ultimate—I don't care what it is."

So he fished for killifish. However, since he couldn't buy a small enough hook and gut to fish for the killifish, he made them himself. Wearing a watchmaker's glasses and using a tiny file, he honed a very delicate hook out of a small scrap of another hook. To see whether the tip was sharp or not, he tested it on the tip of his tongue. But to scrape strands of gut thinner than the fibre of spider web was more than he could manage. So he resorted to obtaining the downy hair from the heads of young girls to use instead. He got hair from three different girls and when he finally went fishing for the killifish, two of the girls' hair split and only one did not, even though all the girls' hair was the same width.

When he got to this point, my companion lowered his voice and said, "I made discreet inquiries and discovered that the girl whose hair did not break was a virgin, and moreover, the other girls came from much more prosperous backgrounds."

I wanted to hear more of what this old fisherman had to say, but this proved impossible. Upon transferring at the port of Inadori, I took the very front seat on the bus and lost track of my companion in the crush of

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people. I got off at Kawazuhama, but he didn't. I was most anxious to learn his method of tying human hair on to that delicate hook. Even with the very easiest bottle knot, the loops would be paper thin, and I was certain that it would untie. I also didn't think the internal knot or the external knot would work either. When I was a child, the only knot I knew was the bottle knot and when I went fishing with a white horsetail, the hook would, at some point, slip out. To make an external knot, even with my white hair, which is the width of three strands of gut, is very difficult.

LATELY, I've been trying to get myself to stop pulling out my white hair and tying it. But every time I sit down at my desk, I unconsciously put my fingers to my head and start pulling out hair after hair. Even though it's a completely innocuous habit, every time I start doing it—much to my chagrin—a vision of those boys who implanted this habit in me floats into my consciousness. It's no laughing matter.

I really would like to break myself of the habit.

translated by Phyllis Birnbaum

Light

Waking from a poorly-lit dream
so fast forgetting it
that coming downstairs whistling
I forgot even forgetting.

A letter said, Poets should hold up
lamps in bad light. Why? That others
may see the corpse with placard round
its neck. I could smell gas.

And this for breakfast. The only
permitted whistling seemed to be
the victim's severed wind-pipe.
Now, morning sky dull as ashes.

Forgive me corpse with placard round
your neck. And you, dybbuk, whistling.
Sometimes a man must close his eyes
and ears. So, letter to the waste-basket.

Yet, later, rapping the table
without intent, noise in my knuckles,
I discovered the sudden gleam of dead
light from last night's dream.

Less a discovery than a recovery.
Silence and glass in a room—
glass in the window and glass
in the mirror facing that window.

Dannie Abse

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Günter Grass

Fleeing towards the Future

Thoughts en route in Asia

THE HUMAN HEAD has a greater circumference than the globe. It is more expansive. At will, it can think and rethink itself and ourselves from a point outside the gravitational pull of the earth. The way it initially writes itself is different from the way it subsequently reads itself. The human head is monstrous.

Hence this excess of ideas. It also explains why we do what no other creature does (not even the bird): we point beyond ourselves. And so the ideas of progress our heads come up with eclipse us. We sense our happiness beyond ourselves and wander aimlessly but hidebound through extensive systems of thought; for man is always supposed to be more than is contained in the knotted bundle of his faculties. Because such excessive demands are made on him, he always demands greater things of himself. He always has to reach beyond himself and search for the better world beyond his allotted time, beyond the present.

As long as human beings have been on the move—and they have been searching for longer than we have records of their existence—they have attempted to catch up with their utopias: this can mean the simple idylls of an existence where all their needs are taken care of, or it can mean a theocracy. For centuries it lay beyond the vale of tears. Then people began to search for the earthly paradise. No, for several paradises, because one was not large enough to include so many different ideas of justice, such variegated desires for freedom, for unshakeable faith, for order, such manifold manias for security. Enough was never enough.

So he develops an image of himself—man with his great head which eclipses the world. And what he imagines becomes reality, is accessible for him, because he can imagine it. What I mean is that it becomes more real than the stubborn realities on which he daily bumps his knee. He wants to know, but already knows what goes on behind the Seven Hills. He insists there is a concrete utopia. He searches for it in everything, even in the cultivation of vegetables. And in the same way the automobile represents progress when compared to the horse-drawn carriage, Cézanne has to represent progress when compared to Raphael. That which is must always be greater than that which was; and what is to come must be more perfect than what is present and what is past. Even the conservative expression: "It was better in the old days and things can only get worse now . . ." is just the inversion of this monstrous thinking beyond the present.

WHAT has Tokyo today to do with the Berlin of the 1920s? What has the Ruhr to do with Hong Kong? Günter Grass's experiences on a journey through Asia find expression in an essay which is no ordinary travelogue. This is his first article since the publication of his latest novel, "The Flounder" (Secker & Warburg), from which we had excerpts in our October 1978 number. Grass's previous contributions to ENCOUNTER *include "Looking Back at* The Tin Drum*" (July 1976), "Attempt at a New Dialogue" (July 1974), "Culture and the* Détente*" (December 1973), "An Interview" (September 1970), and "In the Onion Cellar" (September 1962).*

SO IT IS that the Promethean head can never find peace. Always on a utopian trail, it calls its own searching, roaming and restlessness creative; and it never stops developing newness from the new. Because man is never satisfied with the glory of his achievements; the sky is not the limit. And so for a long time now new and greater ideas have been and are being developed at the heart of nature, by harnessing and controlled unharnessing or simply by going against nature: inorganic synthetics, nuclear power from atomic splits.

Recently new ideas (and newness from the new) have also been developed outside earthbound nature—satellites, space stations orbit around us, leave us, visit other planets, come back with fresh

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data which in the future will in turn enable outsized heads to devise something novel. For example, because UFOs are conceivable they also exist and are now visiting us: in the cinema and in reality. The new conception of God has already taken on a saucer-shape. Salvation or visitation are, once again, expected from out beyond. Work is underway on the astral model of the archangel. Redemption from the earthly vale of tears is supposed to be coming from outer space. The only problem is that the utopia offered by the Revelations of St John is difficult to improve on; and old offers must always be improved on, whatever the cost.

If a present-day Heinrich Schütz wanted to capture in motets the current longing for redemption from the over-populated vale of tears, his emaciated musical bodies would have to sound even more ethereal and celestial than Schütz's starving choirs from the time of the Thirty Years War. Surely someone can manage it. At last we will be able to hear the music of the spheres. At last there is the prospect of vying with all those utopias invented in outsized heads—and trumping them, at least in terms of visual images. There are already films which have overhauled and commercialised our previous and most recent visions. So we can go along to the cinema in family strength, in couples or alone, to take a good look into our future. And those who don't want to go to the cinema (because films, even utopian ones, have generally been edited and cut) open books instead; because we can still read, admittedly with increasing difficulty since we have so little concentration any more and have to fit it in between appointments, admittedly with a greater sense of shame, because we are aware how old-fashioned, pointless, and time-consuming the activity is; but the libraries are still open, reading is still allowed—even if only within limits—and books still entice, especially dusty ones.

MOUNTAINS, OCEANS AND GIANTS is the title of Alfred Döblin's great, exaggerated, forgotten novel (that ought now to be rediscovered).[1] It was first published in 1924: a utopian draft, written directly after his chaotic Wallenstein novel that suggested another kind of utopia quickly receding into the past. It is a book that does not use the stuff of new technologies as fuel for science fiction, but accepts possible and just conceivable technics as given. Its major streams of ideas seem to have been written in a state of visionary overdrive: its rushes of thought, chains of images and inflamed emotions are so matter-of-fact and yet at the same time so diffuse: they reach fever-pitch only to be suddenly extinguished: flooded out by mental activity.

In *Mountains, Oceans and Giants* (*Berge, Meere und Giganten*) city people appear who do not live in landscapes, but in extensive cityscapes. Their weedy bodies, which have been inactive for generations (since they have to do no work), are carefully nourished on synthetic Meki food. They have giant heads, not merely due to the power of their imagination, but as a matter of course. Futuristic? Döblin is looking back as he writes to the middle of the 26th century:

> "The physicists and chemists emancipated themselves from flora and fauna. For a long time now people had thought back only with reluctance and half-amusement to the famines which a single dry summer could at one time bring down upon whole stretches of the earth; the absurd dependence of human beings on heat and drought. There was nothing these chemists and physicists hated more than green cornfields, meadows, the burlesque herding of cattle. . . ."

Shortly after, we are given this report on the future in the imperfect tense of the narrator: "Men moved back into the giant cities. They encapsulated themselves in the cities. Left most of the earth uninhabited. The earth lay fallow. . . ." And he goes on:

> "The hard, vehement struggle of the workers could stop. From then on the western population was almost completely swallowed up in the cityscapes, and divided into a small number of workers and a giant inactive mass. The members of these groups changed places when required or inclined. The mass of loiterers, whose numbers grew, had to be kept occupied with pleasures and mock-work. The uniform racial stock quickly dissolved. A confused variety of forms developed. The rulers had great staffs of experts and mock-parliaments to assist them who handled the problem of diverting the inactive masses."

No wonder that a society structured in this way (which, with our already existing mock-parliaments, we will have sooner than Döblin anticipated) can keep on devising new ideas never before thought of—and no wonder that what it does devise becomes reality: the great empires larger than continents, the Western and the Asian; manipulating the elements against each other in the Uralian war raging between them; the great man-eating hordes of women after the exodus from the cities; the defrosting of Greenland and other wondrous spectacles of this kind, which will have their future one way or another, depending on how chance shapes them, and thanks to outsized human heads. On page 511 of my edition of *Mountains,*

[1] Among Alfred Döblin's books which have been translated into English are *The Three Leaps of Wang-Lun* (1915). *Alexanderplatz, Berlin* (1931) and *Men Without Mercy* (1937).

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Oceans and Giants, the head's last destructive folly is absorbed in the maternal primal power of Veneska, after the giants too have been conquered.

> "The ether was black above them, with tiny suns, sparkling heaps of stars turning to dross. The blackness lay heavily on the people; light glowed from them."

I TOOK this exaggerated book with me, with its theme of man's heaven-storming excesses, to read by way of comparison and contrast when I was on a recent journey through Asia and Africa, where everything is immediate: utopias past and retrospective, fulfilled, failed, far-away in promise.

It is not the case that the utopian theory is exclusively nourished by synthetic foods of the future. What it digested in the past, it excludes from the present so that its hunger will be stilled in the future. In Japan—my first objective—I actually saw one of Alfred Döblin's cityscapes, in comparison with which Germany's Ruhr area is a green-bordered idyll: the great area of Kyoto-Osaka-Kobe. Lying between the harbour towns and the elevated old imperial city, the area can best be described as a flat surface running as far as the eye can see, occupied by huts and tower-blocks, building sites, demolition ruins, echelons of industrial plants, cramped temples and shrines, artificially green sports-fields, compressed heaps of rubbish, and a few forgotten rice-fields. Everything spills over into everything else. Tiny, traditionally styled stone gardens merge into sprawling industrial waste, the edges of which overlap the cemeteries. There where the hewn-stone ancestor cult is still imposing (the last bit of picture-book Japan) it is shielded by the angle of the railway lines which run down to the great nearby area of Tokyo: three quick hours by rail through densely populated country, past the million-strong city of Nagoya until interlocking terraces of rice and nursery greenhouses covered with plastic sheeting insist that there are still some remnants of nature—even in the most cramped space.

Soon these great areas will have become cityscapes. The only landscape left will be that of wastelands and nature parks. And at some time or another (by some Western estimates, right now; in Döblin's book not until page 229) the exodus from the cities will begin. But to where in Japan, where there is no empty space, and where one is never more than a step away from the sea? All this hard work, this frugality, living on rice and fish, this complex smile, this repressed longing for mainland and living space, this already unharnessed potential for supplying the markets of the world with gadgets and accessories—where can it go, this country once defeated in war, now peacefully profit-making, which is still or once again a supreme Asian power.

IN JAPAN'S department stores, which as everywhere else are jam-packed, Japanese who look like Japanese move among long-legged fashion-dolls whose plastic bodies have a rosy complexion and who (dressed in Western styles) impersonate the white race. Is that how people want to be—no more slit-eyes? To look away from all things diminutive with great blue puppet-eyes? Where they come from, the world of the cool and the blonde and the tall, is that where people want to go when the flight from the cities happens? Because the great exodus is coming . . . and sooner than Alfred Döblin's book prophesies.

Tired of freedom from work, disgusted by idleness and the daily intake of Meki food, no longer willing to carry their outsized heads on their weedy bodies, the masses finally escape. They move off in hordes and live in temporary settlements, searching for a past way of life. Then other cityscapes dissolve, in Africa, in Asia, and their masses mix with the Western nomadic hordes and overrun the continent of the steppes: Europe sucks up the over-spilling peoples.

Japan's people are still sticking it out, on their islands, their overloaded ships. They still tolerate having to live shoulder-to-shoulder, stacked in layers, like the thousands of millions of dried fish which lie in Japan's markets, in rows, on sticks, cleaned and salted ready for crated export. Exploiting the seas, not only the neighbouring seas, but foreign, remote ones too, for fish, mussels, algae, seaweed, lichen, sea cucumber, arctic kelp, anything that can be dried, pressed, stored in layers and rows, that will thicken to fish stock or be ground to fish meal, all is harvested, and could one day nourish the world as long as the seas keep producing. One would only have to give them complete access to all the world's oceans and they would bring in their know-how and deliver the goods. They are already running seaweed plantations in the sea, are already breeding. They can already strain deep-green gelatine off algae masses and stamp it out in handy-size blocks, steam it in foil, stack it up in reserve: enough to last till the year 2000. . . .

If this lucrative sea produce were to be used to cope with world shortages and, at the same time, the seas and their exploitation were left to the Japanese (can they turn everything to account?) this produce would in the end be enough to feed the whole world and would put yet another utopia on a regular profit-making basis. And among all the fish-shops, I saw in neighbouring stores thousands of little gadgets, right down to fingernail-size, tiny machines, designed to function faultlessly one way or another, but which, since they are cheap to produce on low wage-levels, would supply the world in the same way as the dried algae: with popular model pocket data-recorders, family-style computers, and other neat little toys, as long as the world's markets remain open.

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NOTHING between them. Over there, the mass product of nature—smelling fishy: over here, the last word in technological jokes—smelling of nothing. Between them a gap, a complex vacuum: Because, between fish and electronics, the Japanese are jiggling like puppets on the remaining strings of residual traditions and in the tangle of modern neuroses. Peaceful (except for the usual world-wide instances of terrorism and counter-terrorism, normal in other places too). Hardworking. Punctual. With so much in common, a past of aggression and a present riddled with repression, the Germans and the Japanese could do a trade-off of national clichés. Ostensibly they are comparable (even if ostensibly the Japanese have a different physical constitution evidently they can't stomach dairy produce). Ostensibly both nations, being repentant sinners, have become democracies which no longer persecute their minorities (especially since Germany is now practically devoid of Jews); for in Japan too the *Eta* (that means "the unclean") are more or less tolerated.

There may be between two to three million. It is difficult to get information about them, and when you do, it is whispered behind the hand. In ancient times the Japanese ate meat and could also stomach dairy produce. When the Buddhists came along in the 6th century and outlawed killing, the new doctrine was confined to the slaughtering of cattle: eating meat was considered unclean. They even got used to going without dairy produce. Since then the slaughterers, butchers, tanners and shoemakers have been despised, and they call them *Eta*. They are everywhere in Japan: collected together in villages, also dispersed singly, especially common in and around Kyoto, Osaka, and Hiroshima. They are not persecuted, but they all suffer disadvantages. However carefully they hide their origins, one day it comes out that they are *Eta*; and so lose their professional position, and with it their social position, sink socially as the rest climb. Of course, just as elsewhere, there is in Japan an emancipatory movement for the protection of minorities. Socialist and Communist MPs who belong to the *Eta* class sit in parliament; but for the present, they are still fighting amongst themselves (ideological differences, of course).

I WAS ALMOST GLAD that there were problems of minorities even in Japan, where everything is so well-balanced and uniform—because by virtue of this the people inhabiting the present world are quite distinct from Döblin's future masses who have left all racial divisions behind them. There is a sprinkling of minorities everywhere. In Japan it is the unclean meat-eaters who are fond of dairy products; in Indonesia it is the efficient Chinese who serve as "the Jews", promoting every kind of trade, but also forcing up the interest on loans. When the terrible purge began in 1966 after the fall of Sukarno, out of fear of the Communists and on the pretext of a Communist threat, between 200,000 and 400,000 people were killed, among them many thousands of Chinese who were suspected of Communism because they were especially good at business and invested their capital at great profit. And in East Africa where my journey finally took me, it is the Indians, not unlike the Japanese *Eta* and the Indonesian Chinese, who find themselves in the role of the Jew. In Uganda Idi Amin has shown how one deals with minorities: one needs them so that, properly coerced, they will keep the economy going; one kills them because they must be made into the inner enemy; one allows a proportion of them to survive because one cannot quite manage without the inner enemy.

The lovely Third World! Indonesia is a rich, green, luxuriant, poor country with three rice-harvests annually. Once ruined by mismanagement by the Dutch, it is now plagued with its own corruption. A third of its rice demands have to be imported, while similarly rice-eating Japan, in the midst of industrial waste and without the blessing of three harvests, has rice to spare and export.

Ventilators, bicycles, motor-bikes, film, all the technical trifles humans can devise to increase their needs: almost everything comes from Japan, Hong Kong, Singapore, the three dominating cityscapes. Their hypermarkets loom into the 21st century, their glass fronts reflecting each other, while down below at their feet the slum districts proliferate, the Middle Ages persist and the fear of demons is still prevalent. Cheap goods flow as contraband through the only open channels of distribution, those of corruption. And because the practice of bribery is ubiquitous and quite normal in Indonesia, opening every door, from Siemens to Unilever, the Japanese have been allowed to fell the last rare wood forests far away in Borneo, and so systematically that there is not even a hope for a backwoodsman's dream of reforestation. The Japanese are already forcing their way into the Java sea. Soon they will have used the back-stairs of corruption to secure the deep-sea fishing rights between the Twelve Thousand islands: because the Indonesian government is so exclusively concerned with keeping power, ensuring its sinecures and the growth of its Swiss bank accounts, there is no time left to do the obvious for the remaining 120 million Indonesians, 80 million of whom are living shoulder to shoulder and multiplying on Java: to develop a deep-sea industry out of the pitiful coastal efforts which could, with a refrigeration system, provide the country with fish.

But the fridge fellows are interested in quicker profits, and the deep-sea fishing is being left to the Japanese. They know about that sort of thing. They are not only good for hundreds of thousands of motor-bikes and millions of neat little pocket-

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calculators, they also know that everything depends on fish and the seas: in short, they know what's good for the future, for survival.

For we have not quite got to the stage that Alfred Döblin did in his brainstorm of the 1920s. There aren't any Meki-factories yet which provide a free worldwide service of synthetic food to the cityscapes and their slums. Or have we got this far, but are only holding back the momentous invention as (in Döblin's book) the Industrial Senates of the English cityscapes did? They imprisoned the inventor Meki, a wise cynic who lived only for his inventions, for ten years . . . until he killed himself.

> "London grasped the fact that one only had to be in exclusive possession of all the secrets of synthetics and to be in control of their manufacture, and one was in possession of a unique means of power."

In Döblin's book, it is the European bigshots who ensure supremacy by being the sole distributors of the Meki food (monuments are erected to Meki). I rather suspect that the Japanese will be leading in this field. They are so quiet, so politely persistent, and have channelled their *Kamikaze* destructiveness and self-destructiveness into peaceful aims. Gentle, not noisy like the overbearing Americans, modest and not arrogant like the bigheaded Europeans, they will creep along with their innovations: while still commanding the major markets for motor-bikes, photo-accessories, small computers and dried fish, the Japanese Meki-factories will be announcing the first modest triumphs in capturing the world market for synthetic foodstuffs. The turn-over is still small, it's a little absurd and ridiculous, but the demand is growing: among the rich and spoilt (out of curiosity), amongst the masses (out of hardship).

BECAUSE HARDSHIP is on the increase. Everything else may be stagnating; every step forward may prove to be a step back; in Europe there may be masses of pensioners, and schools may become empty (because at some time too few children were produced). Asia knows no drop in population due to the pill. Children everywhere, in the slums, in the villages, beautiful children, happy children, quiet, undernourished children who are mad keen to produce more children, because children give life a teeming sense, because even the poorest people are allowed to do that, to keep on reproducing themselves, because lots of children take the place of social security. (Has anyone yet of those in power ever thought of replacing this social security system of the poor, based on having lots of children, with an official social security system? Because that would be "Socialism", that could lead directly to Communism. . . .)

That is why the only real growth today is the population explosion, and it is not happening in slow motion. It has other growth as a consequence: unemployment, hardship, undernourishment, epidemics, famine. And if the Japanese aren't soon in the position (which the English are in Döblin's book) of providing mankind with synthetic Meki food in addition to the computer and worldwide data-bank systems, we might as well despair, because nothing else will work.

THAT'S HOW writers talk. The action always continues—in their books. When the Meki-factories had ensured the great appeasement of hunger through synthetic food, humanity began to flag and to grow tired of itself because it was kept in a continual state of satiation and inactivity:

> "A dangerous indifference has suddenly manifested itself and is rotting everything. . . . Luxury, games, feasting no longer had much effect. Mankind was confronted with fashionable, beautiful, life-scourging, breathtaking objects produced by the machines. Dumbstruck their jaws dropped. They began to rummage in old, forgotten costumes."

In order to counteract this slackness and dangerous retrogression in mankind, the Industrial Senate of the Western cityscapes unleashed the Uralian war. When the barrage was over and the Western and Asian masses had devoured one another, with the renewal of peace, the future was once more supposed to lie in daily Meki food. Then came the exodus from the cities. People moved away from the controllers of the long-range and short-range instruments. Nomadic movements unsettled the whole world. Farming tools were dug up. Shamans, the so-called "Deceivers", preached: Back to Nature. So once again the great heads had to think up something new, a new mission for humanity. They began to tackle the defrosting of Greenland: a superhuman disaster, unleashing the fury of nature; and all achieved without any kind of nuclear power such as we have devised in our great heads for present-day disasters or utopian conveniences.

HAVE NO FEAR, something will survive it all. For even in the world of Mountains, Oceans and Giants there are survivors: though admittedly reduced to archaic dimensions, and with rather smaller heads. Everything in general develops quite differently in Döblin's future world. There are no star wars. We are not encountered by astral bodies of a third kind. Everything remains squarely and two-footed on the earth. Things rock a little, and we stumble a bit. Even the very latest technologies are absent or only alluded to (they are optional, as if sketched with his left hand). No detail is spun out

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and made to sound authentic. Even the Meki factories are only notional. In the Uralian war and in other classical attempts to resolve conflicts long-distance ray guns, called "appliances" for short, are just mentioned in passing. The defrosting of Greenland, the colossal spectacle, is made feasible by tourmaline screens whose power was stored up when the volcanoes of Iceland were blown up as a preparatory measure and their energy was captured. Döblin simply asserts this, and behold: it is fact. As credible as the fact that in his future world of Mountains, Oceans and Giants there are no writers.

They are absent from the beginning. Nobody writes, nobody publishes. Since nobody reads, no forbidden books are confiscated either. Only on a single occasion, when the synthetic Meki food results in general exhaustion and dangerous mental regression, do we find:

> "Germans held the heavy bible in their hands, turned the pages of their hymn-books, sang gloomily in the forest . . ."

Otherwise no encounters of a literary kind. And because, for all the violence and counter-violence, individual and mass destruction, not a single writer is ever arrested, no writers ever have to protest against arrest or expulsion or psychiatric abuse. It is as if in his far-sightedness Döblin had leapt beyond his existence as an author, the Nazi book-burning to come, his anti-Hitler exile: it is as if he and his kind had no future.

BUT SURELY WE HAVE NOT got to that stage. Not yet. In Japan, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Thailand, India, in African Kenya, wherever I went—as lecture-schedules arranged—there are writers, people that is, who in a hesitant, old-fashioned way (which cannot significantly be speeded up by any technology) are making words, forming sentences, and helping the various contradictory realities to a new, fictitious, and thus literary reality, and are thereby following a dangerous profession. For the non-literary realities and their custodians see themselves in exclusively political terms. They will not admit of any other reality alongside their own, not even a markedly fictitious one. Thus it is that everywhere in the world where only a single reality holds sway, writers are reduced to silence by censors, bans, confiscations, expulsions, arrests, or being cut-off from all realities for good.

That happened in Indonesia more than 12 years ago to the writer Pramudya Ananta Toer, whose books deal with the narrow reality of landless peasants oppressed by usury and corruption. Reason enough for Sukarno's successors to lock him up as a subversive with thousands of others in an island concentration camp. For 12 years no trial took place, no amnesty came his way. No appeals and petitions were heard. The military rulers of the island state of Indonesia, whose sole anxiety is safeguarding their own power, fear the writer (and are not lone eccentrics in this fear).

Where I come from (the two Germanys) and wherever I went (whether in Thailand or Kenya) they have always understood or quickly learnt how to deal with writers. Leaving the East German Democratic Republic to one side—everyone knows about that—we realise all the more clearly that our West German snooping system is furthering a development which has a long tradition in Germany and has become the dreary practice of Third-World states which have barely won their struggle for independence.

Since the beginning of last year the Kikuyu writer Ngugi Wa Thiong'o has been held under arrest at an unkown location. The ruling cliques in Nairobi do not care if in using their power thus it is indistinguishable from the abuse of power in South Africa and in Czechoslovakia, in Chile and in Soviet Russia. In dealing with people who see, dream up, demand, or just describe (as writers are in the habit of doing) "other realities" outside or alongside the prescribed reality, the prevailing ideologies have approximated to one another. Their common need for security suggests this convergence. However hostile and mutually exclusive the capitalist and communist systems may claim to be, when it is a question of preserving internal security—in the language of the pulpit: of safeguarding internal peace—they appear to be united in abusing their power.

Because I am a writer, this fiendish harmony is brought home to me first and foremost by the fate of writers; but it must also be pointed out that hundreds of thousands of people who are not writers owe their expulsion, their arrest, and often enough their death to the same ideological concurrence.

BUT WRITERS are particularly suitable. They are sinister, because anachronistically frugal. They get by on next to nothing: a little paper. They thrive on contradictions. What they think up takes shape, goes its own way, acts without being answerable to anyone. That is intolerable. It disturbs the peace, endangers security, encourages radicalism, hinders progress, merely raises questions when we need simple answers: clear-cut, practical, applicable to the world we live in, okay.

That is why writers are no longer to be found in *Mountains, Oceans and Giants*. In Döblin's work mankind is more advanced. The great concurrence of the prevailing ideologies which has emerged in our times has no need of them, not even as decoration, and has got rid of these troublesome questioners long ago. Or, rather, they still exist, only they do not write any more: day-dreaming

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marginal characters, who do not seek to express themselves but purposelessly wear themselves out. All that remains is a literature lived and practised beyond all proof sheets . . . by the extraordinary Jonathan, for example.

JONATHAN'S mother belonged to the new ruling class, the technological nobility. Although at the end of the Uralian war in the cityscape of Berlin all research was banned by the autocratic consuls Marke and Marduk, she worked secretly in a group which had set out to further the development of synthetic food by accelerating the processes of growth. Consul Marduk had also once belonged to this group but had then broken away and ordered a radical retrograde development: he even wanted to abolish the old-established Meki food, only there was not enough arable and pasture land in the grossly overpopulated cityscape that stretched between the Oder and the Elbe.

In the course of a purge Marduk had 21 scientists arrested, Jonathan's mother among them, and locked up in an experimental forest, whose trunks and branches began to swell and proliferate and give off sap to such an extent that the forest became one with the bodies of the scientists. A synthetic natural mass so to speak, forever making new combinations, caused the inventors of the miracle of growth to become completely incorporated in their invention:

> "The mammoth, dripping, crashing growth crushed, squeezed, crunched, squashed people, cracked open their chests, broke their vertebrae, compressed their skulls, poured their white brains over the roots. The trunks touched one another. . . ."

And then:

> "Marduk pressed his outsized head against the window: 'It's over now. You can't do any more.' "

The lad Jonathan remains as a favourite of the power-mad Marduk and varying women, who preside over feminist leagues in a domineering fashion, countercurrents to the male world, yet as power-hungry as men. A persistent battle exists between the sexes, surging up again and again, through which Jonathan reels, suffering and vulnerable, never clearly allied to one camp or the other. As a sensitive and yet expressionless potency, he is the incarnation of the writer who no longer writes: a plaything of the powers that be, in whose arsenal of terror are fused the torture instruments of all present systems; just like that synthetic experimental forest which melted down its inventors.

As in George Orwell's utopian novel *1984*, in Döblin's work all the superficially hostile ideologies of today have merged. If in Orwell's oligarchical collectivism, as a global power-system, Fascist and Stalinist structures are one, i.e. combined and no longer distinguishable by conflicting emblems, and, as a synthesis of both power-systems, running the enormous comprehensive data-bank, this future tendency is in fact the same in Döblin's novel. In both books our present-day social systems of a capitalist and communist kind no longer exist, with their clerico-Fascist or semi-communist military régimes as sub-orders, nor do concepts like democracy, liberalism, trade-unionism, democratic-Socialism. Or rather they are no longer distinguishable because melted down into a single total will-to-power which controls everything and whose bottled-up aggressions, without the ideological foundations still current today, explode in continental wars, regional pacification programmes, and occasionally in battles between the sexes.

Of course the talk is still about humanism; of course the achievements of the European Enlightenment, the values of Christian ethics, the right of the individual and Human Rights in general, and the right to work are all invoked and trotted off parrot-fashion. But the future reality prophesied by Döblin and later by Orwell has already begun; the prospects are that these utopian goals will be reached earlier than the dates that have been set for them.

WHETHER IN ASIA OR AFRICA, none of the established power-systems or those establishing themselves afresh by means of arbitrary upheavals can be clearly defined in terms of traditional ideologies. Instead, rearing its head on all sides is that oligarchical collectivism which Orwell predicted for 1984, which Döblin assigned to his cityscape as their system of power and control. No matter if the ruling classes in Indonesia or Thailand turn out to be "anti-Communist" and for that reason totalitarian, no matter if the rulers in Burma or Cambodia define themselves as "Socialist" and enforce their absolute rule for reasons of anti-Capitalism and anti-Imperialism: the increasing common interest of all the above-mentioned states is that, with interchangeable ideological clothes and irrespective of shifting ruling classes, they should grow into a global collectivism for which the industrial states of both power blocks freely (according to Döblin and Orwell) supply the technological superstructure: from the data bank to fissionable material.

It is no wonder if, in so imminent a future, writers lurch between the powers-that-be as touching anachronisms, like Jonathan: of course they still go on writing; of course their appeals and protests are as always indebted to the pathos of humanism; of course the authorities lock them up here and there, overestimating their dangerousness, banish them to islands, drive them abroad, or

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attempt to shut their mouths by means of a court order; of course they are still needed a bit and are encouraged with prizes and grants in what is elsewhere a criminal activity; of course the authorities generally act as if they wanted to preserve a dying species for a while longer; yet it is discernible, clearer than just a vague suspicion, why it is no longer possible for the writers in Döblin's future reality to express themselves; they are there like Jonathan simply as hysterical-emotional beings: left destitute without paper.

But even diminished to that extent, they still disturb. They wander like strange creatures through the cityscapes; their emotional power, which has lost the means of expressing itself and thus gleams all the more brightly, is felt to be an irritant. They radiate playful tenderness, overflowing sympathy, old-fashioned charity, longing for a past that would like to imagine a future for itself. In the midst of insensitive power-systems they remain sensitive. No terror deters them from opening their hearts to people. In the midst of slum areas containing all the misery possible in this world, in regions of drought from which state-sanctioned corruption squeezes the last resources, wherever injustice silently accuses the heavens above, I saw Jonathan at work. Man or woman. He has no gender. He is an active feeling, independent of utility and success (and probably also a reflection of that Dr Döblin who tended the poor in the *Urban-Krankenhaus* in old Berlin).

IN THAILAND he is a young doctor who is in charge of a 10-bed hospital in the north-western district of Prathai, in the middle of a drought and hunger province. A boyish person at first sight, 28-years-old, cheerful: with the customary smile of that country. I saw him concentrating on his almost hopeless task, the only doctor for 80,000 inhabitants of the district. Epidemics, tuberculosis, tardy demands for sterilisation, undernourishment and malnutrition and the diseases that follow in their wake determine his working day. The region is ruled by a few rich landowners, for whom armed gangs in their pay round up the last water buffaloes of the impoverished peasants. The police shield the landowners. The doctor knows that. He is powerless. He has settled for the undernourished children suffering from worms.

In a matter-of-fact way, as if he only wanted to confirm the data of his regional statistics, he told us the reasons—an unbalanced diet of rice, lack of vitamins B^1, B^2, A, protein shortage—and showed us the symptoms: faded brittle hair, ocular diseases, inflamed corners of the mouth, rashes, swollen stomachs. If he were to take a stand against the terror of the gangs and the corruption of the state, he would have to leave the children and the sick and go off into the jungle where the resistance is assembling. This doctor wants to stay, as long as they let him.

There were forests here at one time, which were cut down in the customary practice of wasteful land exploitation. We hear that now there is no rain even in monsoon periods, he cannot transport serious cases; there is no ambulance. Power failure is an everyday occurrence. His monthly salary is laughable. What motivates this doctor to hold out in his hospital without water? He is an isolated case; there is no doctor in the neighbouring districts, as there is this doctor here. He was born in Prathai, studied in Bangkok, and returned to his district when he had finished his studies. Doctors are thick on the ground in Bangkok. None of them wants to go into the country, into the drought areas. They want to remain in the cities, to dream of a practice in Europe or America.

Why do I write about this lone doctor? Because I want to place him, he who returned to his province, against thousands of Asiatic and African doctors who have studied in Europe and America, have stayed there and not returned to their provinces: doctors on paper, lost to their native countries. A lot of them say they are seeking asylum, when they have run away from their task. This single doctor challenges them all. Their refusal is to be measured by his behaviour. He ought to put them to shame; but I am afraid they will only jeer at him.

IN KHLONG THOEI, the mass slum in Bangkok's harbour district, I saw a young woman who could be the sister of the doctor in Prathai. Born and brought up there, she has nevertheless remained in the slums as a teacher. She teaches unregistered children who, because they are not registered, are not allowed into any state school. Khlong Thoei is a maze of shacks on stilts sticking out of a morass fed by refuse and mud, which swells up during the monsoon period and swallows up the gangways between the shacks. 60,000 people live here, of whom 8,000 are infants. The assistance of the young teacher is enough for just 100 children. Every day she serves each of them a bowl of diluted soya milk. *Terre des Hommes* has donated the soya milk; and also supports the doctor in Prathai with medicines.

They are the celebrated drops in the ocean, each of which still counts. In their futility the work of the doctor and the slum school (plus soya milk) of the woman teacher seemed to me to be more real and more honest than many grandiose developmental projects. Those resources for the most part trickle away in administrative channels, and their show-results only widen the gulf between the undeveloped region and the highly endowed special achievement: whether it is a steel-works, a semi-automatic fertiliser factory, a super clinic or even, as in

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Djakarta, a photo-composition printing works. This does not print school books, as originally intended, but mainly illustrated wrapping paper. Of course the paper has to be imported, because before they took the trouble to sponsor an Indonesian paper works they preferred to put the cart before the horse and, proud of the latest know-how (and supported by the tax-privileged capital aid of West German and Dutch publishers), they built a pointless printing works, which now spews out wrapping paper every day in order to remain profitable and only makes products dearer in a country which is poor enough anyway: bad planning which is literally a write-off.

No, Western-Aiders! Given the choice, rather *Terre des Hommes* and the many drops in the ocean. This small relief organisation, financed by private donations, supported neither by state funds nor by contributions from the Church, has concentrated especially on the plight of children in slum areas. There is no lack of them. For with the only substantial ratio of increase of present times—the unrestrained growth in world population—must be classed, along with the attendant ratios of increase in unemployment and malnutrition, the rural exodus of exploited peasants out of the drought and hunger provinces into the slums.

Here the future appears in outline. Here the scenes are set for Döblin's mass conflicts. Here, in the cityscapes, worlds are clashing in a do-or-die struggle with their neighbours, as for example in Bombay.

About 70,000 people live in the Janatha colony, which is now called "Cheetah Camp"—one of the largest slums in the Bombay area, of whose 7,000,000 inhabitants at a cautious estimate between two and three million people live in slums. Immediately next to the former region of the Janatha colony arose the Indian nuclear research centre, to which India owes its first atom bomb. The neighbouring slums did not please the nuclear scientists. They called the slum-dwellers a security risk. So the Janatha colony was forcibly cleared in May 1976 and levelled with bulldozers. As a new slum district the 70,000 were allocated an open piece of land by the sea, which becomes swamped and marshy at the start of the rainy season. During the first months several hundred children died. Suicides increased. Meanwhile the nuclear research centre made plans for the free space to become recreational land. Since then golf courses have been built there. You can unwind with a game of tennis. There will soon be a swimming-pool; the nuclear scientists are enjoying their research again, they feel secure now they're just among themselves: the new élite. Those who know. The part and particle knowers. Those with heads which are too large, in which is devised that which points beyond man and his slum horizon. It all depends on them. They are precious. The future belongs to them.

In *Mountains, Oceans and Giants* the scientists as an élite are identical with the autocratic senates of the cityscapes. They have abolished parliaments or degraded them to mock-parliaments. They have industry at their backs; and they were the undoing of the machine-wreckers. The results of their researches—and not the dim need of the masses—point the way ahead. They have dug the graves of laborious agriculture and the principle of compulsory full-time employment, by rationalising their plants and securing the measly existence of the working masses with synthetic food as they are gradually being freed from labour. After their prescribed idleness threatened to turn into anarchy, the scientists launched the Uralian war as an outlet for mankind. It was scientists who, after the exodus from the cities, chained the restlessly roaming masses of settlers to a new objective: the defrosting of Greenland. And when the tourmaline screens had laid Greenland bare as far as its cretaceous strata and had brought its vegetation to the boil; when gigantic aurochs and flying dragons as long as streets broke away from the growth which melted all things into each other, left Greenland, attacked the Western cityscapes and struck terror into the masses, it was again the scientists who knew what to do. They handed over the struggle against these tourmaline-created monsters to the so-called tower-people: gigantic synthetic beings into which animals and human bodies were melted down, as in times of old in Marduk's experimental forest that melted all things into each other, and were boosted to giant growth by tourmaline irradiation. However the panicked masses, as well as the laboratories and Meki factories, were removed from the surface of the earth and placed in underground cityscapes:

> "When storey on storey had been dug into the clay deposits, larger and larger cavities split open, the earth masses and blasted rocks piled up between the rows of houses on the surface to form screes, nobody was afraid any more. They did not run away from the monsters. They were on a tremendous new expedition. The senates called out: 'Get off the earth!' and they blissfully dug themselves in; they now experienced for themselves the miracle of human ingenuity that the Greenlanders had experienced."

Is Döblin's vision deviously pointing to the future? Even if the defrosting of Greenland with all its fabulous consequences can only be classed as a grandiose literary Gothic melodrama, the transfer of mankind or a part of mankind beneath the surface of the earth (alternatively: giant concentration camps which circle the earth as satellites) remains

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imaginable because possible, or possible because imaginable. The disgust of the Indian nuclear scientists (and also their need for security) was strong and plausible enough to make the clearance of the mass slum in their vicinity seem logical. The present slum area "Cheetah Camp" lies right next to the arsenal of the Indian Navy: the question of security is raised once again. But where are we to put the slums in Bombay, Calcutta, Hong Kong, Djakarta, Bangkok, and Nairobi, if their removal and partial reorganisation just results in bigger and bigger slums and an increased rural exodus? "Get out into space!" could well be the recommendation of an International Commission for Reorganisation the day after tomorrow.

THE SLUMS are in any case cut off from municipal relief: not connected to refuse disposal, drainage, the school and hospital services, or to the municipal water supply. Troublesome limbs which are cut off, abandoned. But they rot, stink, still keep growing, amalgamate, threaten to melt down the cities—and nowhere to dump them; unless that writer who among many books wrote the book *Mountains, Oceans and Giants* did actually point to the future.

We now know what overgrown heads have thought up, are capable of thinking up. Silently or loudly asserting the opposite, people have accepted that after us may come the deluge. Of course the latest inventions are inquisitively sounding out the future, but at the present time the Middle Ages are catching up with us: epidemics, fear of demons, a diffuse longing for redemption, religious mania are on the increase. Not only the President of the United States of America is indebted to Divine guidance: recently several thousand Brahmins gathered in central India to make a sacrifice to the gods: provisions to the value of three and a half million marks, rice, milk, vegetable fats were burnt in the middle of a famine area. A leading Brahmin said in an interview: It is senseless to help the current victims of tornadoes; instead we ought to try to prevent future tornadoes by impressive sacrifices. . . .

SO MY JOURNEY ENDED, while the race between utopias still continues. It should also be added that the film *The Killer Whale* was showing in the cinemas in Hong Kong, Djakarta, and Bangkok; that in the Grand Hotels of Japan, even in the lifts, only classical European music is played (Bach, Vivaldi, Purcell); that people are out to have a good time everywhere, even if it is in the form of cockfights (and life appears especially colourful amongst even the poorest classes); that demons actually do exist in Asia; that in the whole of Asia I found that "Germany" only appears in the business section of the newspapers or in connection with the name of Franz Beckenbauer; that on this quiet overcrowded continent the German tourists actually do not sound louder than the French, the Dutch and all the others. . . .

Back home everybody was wrapped up in himself and his own petty anxieties. Quarrelsome asides, aggressive gestures in word, image, and deed, all presumably directed against "the enemy within." Madness in Asia is in flower, in Europe it splits hairs. But then you can get anything over here—and so nicely packaged too. The only thing not available is much future. You have to look around, take your time, begin all over again, read. In my calendar Alfred Döblin's 100th birthday was coming up.

Budgerigars

Complete with agendas and minutes, the budgerigars
pose stiffly along the grouped tables. Each
is attentive, but minding its own business;
the head budgerigar yawns on the end perch.

Habitual captives, with nowhere to fly off to
now for the evening their cage is whisked away,
the budgerigars assume postures of comfort
to persuade both themselves and each other that they

are at ease with these items, matters arising,
as elsewhere with mirrors or packets of seed.
The evening moves off with smooth formalities;
politely restrained, the birds begin to feed.

John Gohorry

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INTERVIEW

A Conversation with Isaac Bashevis Singer

THIS INTERVIEW was recorded in Isaac Bashevis Singer's New York apartment shortly before he was awarded the 1978 Nobel Prize for Literature. The temperature was in the 90s. Mr Singer himself admitted me. His shoelaces were undone, just as he describes his younger self in his latest book of memoirs, *A Young Man In Search Of Love,* always in need of a woman to keep him tidy. His wife, it so happens, was out. The apartment was full of books and papers, unsorted because Mr Singer had only recently returned from Miami, where he goes annually to avoid the New York winters. Sensing my apprehension Mr Singer took command.

"Come", he said, motioning toward the sofa, "ask me the questions and we will talk like old friends."

Despite the fact that he has now lived longer in the United States than he ever did in Poland Mr Singer's English remains heavily accented. But this is not so odd when you remember that English is his second language, after Yiddish, as an incident which occurred during the interview makes clear.

The telephone rang. Mr Singer went to answer it. He returned looking perplexed. "What is this word 'bullion'?" he said. "There was a man there who asked, 'Mr Singer, are you interested in gold bullion?' and I said, 'No, I'm a vegetarian.' Then the man put down the receiver." "He meant bullion, bars of gold", I said. "Ach", said Mr Singer, "I thought he meant bouillon." He laughed. "This is really something to tell people", he said.

The primary purpose of the interview was to ask Mr Singer about his brother, Israel Joshua, a literary lion of the Yiddish world until his premature death in 1944. His reputation was built upon novels such as *The Brothers Ashkenazi, Yoshe Kalb, East of Eden, The Family Carnovsky,* now all unjustly ignored—a condition Mr Singer is anxious to remedy.

However, as I hoped, the conversation also turned to Mr Singer's own writing.

CLIVE SINCLAIR

A BOOK OF YOUR STORIES opens with this note, "I dedicate these pages to the blessed memory of my brother, I. J. Singer, author of The Brothers Ashkenazi, Yoshe Kalb *etc., who helped me to come to this country and was my teacher and master in literature. I am still learning from him and his work." Would you begin by expanding on this?*

SINGER: Yes, I will tell you. When I was born my brother was already a boy of eleven years, so when I grew up Joshua—we seldom called him Israel Joshua—was already, in a way, grown. He was the big boy in the family and I was a baby. And since he was tall and, in my eyes, good-looking—also in the eyes of other people—and clever, I looked up to him more than to anybody else. Even more than to my parents. Parents are parents. My father was a rabbi, but here was a man. Later when my father moved to Warsaw where he was also a rabbi in some poor street, my brother began to speak against the Jewish race, against studying the Talmud all day long, and even though I was so much younger I understood what he said. There were many discussions in our house, there were discussions all the time. My father and even my mother, of course, contended that this is what Jews are born for: to study the Talmud, to keep all the commandments, and just to live the way our fathers and grandfathers lived, not even to change the clothes. If they wore long *kapots* we should wear the same; if they didn't wear a tie we shouldn't wear a tie, although it's not written anywhere in the Talmud or in the Torah not to wear one. My brother attacked of course. He said: How long should we wait for the Messiah when we've waited for him two thousand years and he didn't come? We may wait another two thousand years and he still will not come. And what proof is there really that the Almighty revealed Himself to Moses on Mount Sinai? The Christians have their books and the Mohammedans have their old books; and if we say that their books are not true how do we know that our own are? Logic spoke out of his

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mouth, you know; and I, a little boy, thought: he is right. Although I would never have dared to say this, but I felt so. Also he described how poor the Jews are in the *shtetl*, how they learned nothing except the Talmud. The whole world is progressing, and we are still in the Middle Ages. Every word which he said was to me a bomb, a real spiritual kind of explosion. And my parents were not really able to answer him. Because sooner or later my father began to scream, you Unbeliever, you wicked man. The fact that he screamed was a proof that he couldn't answer. And later on my brother got the courage to take off his long robe, his *kapot*, and to put on European clothes; and he looked so much nicer. Of course everything he did, and everything he said, was wonderful in my eyes; I was a real hero-worshipper. I think he is the only hero that I ever worshipped.

First he was a painter. In those years he was, of course, realistic. He did not make a man look as Miró, or Picasso, did when he drew a few lines and said, it's a goat or a man. He tried to be as loyal, as faithful to nature as he could be. But people have done it before him better, and he decided that this is not his way. A man knows best what he can do and what he cannot. He decided that his real power was in literature. He used to read his stories to my mother and I listened. After I had learned to read Yiddish well, he once put a story of his into a desk drawer. When he left I opened the drawer and I read it. And what he wrote looked beautiful to me. So there is no question that he influenced me mightily. I don't think anybody else has ever influenced me as much.

WHEN I BEGAN to write myself my brother encouraged me and he gave me certain rules for writing. He said: when you write tell a story, and don't try to explain the story. If you say that a boy fell in love with a girl you don't have to explain to the reader why a boy falls in love, the reader knows just as much about love as you do or more so. You tell him the story, and the explanations and interpretations he will make himself, or critics will do it for him. He had two words which he used: *images* and *sayings*. Sayings were for him essays, interpretations. He called sayings, *zugerts*. It means you just talk, you just say things. You don't paint a picture, or bring out an image. He said, leave the *zugerts* to the others. You tell them a story. Because you may know stories which they don't know—but you don't know more about life than they do. Although these rules were very simple it took me years to understand what he meant by image, what he meant by *zugerts* or sayings.

—Do you know where Israel Joshua himself got these ideas? Who influenced him?

SINGER: I think he must have taken them from Flaubert or the Russian classics. Gogol, Tolstoy, they too avoided *zugerts*, although not as much as Flaubert. When I began to weigh things by myself I said to myself: Is it true what he said? is there any truth in it? aren't there any exceptions? In the long run I convinced myself that images never get stale; and *zugerts*, sayings, no matter how clever and how brilliant, are almost obsolete from the very beginning, because no matter what a human being has to say about life, it has already been said before. Even in ancient times by people who knew nothing about telephones or electricity; but about life they knew already, Seneca and the others; and there you already have all the clever *zugerts*. Of course once in a while you have to say something to bind together the images, or you have to allow the images themselves to say something. But in the long run it is true. My brother influenced me mightily.

However, there is a limit to influence. He had his character, he had his genes, and I had my genes. And although I accepted him, loved him, admired him, my way was different. He was more or less a realist, a naturalist; but I was inclined to mysticism and psychic research and so on; and there our ways parted, but in a most peaceful way . . . because my brother was also interested in the supernatural, and I was interested in life the way he described it . . . because even miracles must be embedded in life. They don't come out from nowhere.

—Perhaps one may sum up the difference between you this way; you deal with a world that may be nothing more than an illusion, whereas your brother dealt with a real world that was built upon illusions. At the end of his masterpiece The Brothers Ashkenazi *the mourners say, "Everything we have built was built on sand. . . ." As was the village where you lived as boys: Leoncin. That was really built on sand.*

SINGER: Illusion? Call it what you want. It is true. When I published *Satan in Goray* he was still alive of course; and he read it and was astonished that his brother could go so far away from him. At the same time it wasn't *so* far away from him because he also knew all these things. But it was good that we were not alike; it would have been a tragedy, at least for me, if I were to write just like my brother.

—There is one incidence I can think of when you do both seem to be using the same material. In your latest book A Young Man In Search Of Love, *a man called Leon Treitler marries a girl half his age. Surely this is an echo of Yakob Ashkenazi's romance with Gertrude in* The Brothers Ashkenazi*?*

SINGER: Maybe. I will tell you. Because writers

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write about their own environment they do repeat themselves in a way; they come back to the same types. Tolstoy, for example, had the same type, Levin in *Anna Karenina* and Pierre in *War and Peace*. But there's no tragedy in it; it is only the complete dilettante who can fly from one environment to another. He is today in Spain and tomorrow in Ireland; and the next day he's an Eskimo. The real writer has his address, has his home, and he always comes back; so there is always an element of repetition. And if two writers are brothers it's inevitable that the writers should not write once but often about the same people.

—The one novel in which your brother comes closest to your own work is Yoshe Kalb. *He tells a story of religious fanaticism, mysticism and passion, which has at its heart the enigma of Nachumtche, who flees the town of Nyesheve, after being seduced by the ancient rabbi's young wife, only to return years later with a second identity, that of Yoshe Kalb. Am I correct in guessing that this is your favourite among his novels?*

SINGER: Yes. *Yoshe Kalb* contains a lot of the mysticism. Except that my brother took mysticism not with one grain of salt but with many. Which I don't do, because to me the mystic is not someone to make fun of or to mock. I feel sometimes that if he would have lived longer he might have become a mystic himself; maybe yes, maybe no. Certainly if my brother would have lived another twenty or thirty years, which he should have, he would have developed more and more, and he would have published stunning books—I'm absolutely convinced of that.

—I believe that the plot of Yoshe Kalb *came from a story your father told?*

SINGER: Yes, my father told this story not once but many times. Whenever there was talk about "disappearing" my father came up with it, and I remember I heard it myself maybe ten times; and I was every time as baffled as the first time because my father was a wonderful story-teller. He never realised this, but he could tell a story; so could my mother. And the story in itself is really baffling. That a man should come up and say, I'm Yoshe Kalb, when others say he was not. Until today we don't know if he was or he wasn't. A story which is as dramatic as this had to be told in a dramatic way.

—As it turned out Yoshe Kalb *went on to become one of the great hits of the Yiddish theatre, in a production by Maurice Schwartz.*

SINGER: Well, Maurice Schwartz, of course. Although my brother wrote it, Maurice Schwartz did not play it the way my brother would have wanted. Maurice Schwartz was by nature a *kitsch* director or drama-maker. He wanted everything to be like a super-colossal Hollywood production. Although he never had any chance to work in Hollywood, he was a Hollywood man. So he made it more sensational than my brother wanted it to be. Listen, when you sell a play to a director or to a producer—you are no longer the boss. No matter how much they consult, they do what they want. It's like if you have children: once these children grow up you're no longer the father who tells them exactly what to do. They will do what they want to do.

—In the introduction which you have written for Yoshe Kalb *you call your brother a sceptic. You also call yourself a sceptic. Wouldn't you say that while your brother had a sceptical view of this world your own attitude is more ambiguous?*

SINGER: I'm a sceptic. I'm a sceptic about making a better world. When it comes to this business where you tell me that this-or-that régime, one sociological order or another, will bring happiness to people, I know that it will never work, call it by any name you want. People will remain people, and they have remained people under communism and all other kinds of isms. But I'm not a sceptic when it comes to belief in God. I do believe. I always did. That there is a plan, a consciousness behind creation, that it's not an accident. That what they call evolution is not a blind process. Even if there was evolution it was evolution with a plan. But my brother, he was a sceptic. He said: maybe there was no plan, maybe there is no God, maybe there is no higher consciousness. In this respect we are different. But when it came to human beings and to their social ideals, we were both sceptics of the same kind. He always used to say, it would all be very nice if there would be no human beings to practise these things. For years I kept on hearing that the selling of ammunition is only the capitalist's doing. Why should the working people produce ammunition that people use to kill one another? And now we see that Soviet Russia is selling ammunition all over the world, and giving savages guns and bombs to kill each other. They said that prostitution and drunkenness and the like would not exist in a socialistic order—which is not true, they do exist. So when it comes to the Happy World, to the world of Utopia, we are both equally sceptical. When it comes to higher things I'm less of a sceptic than my brother was.

—You also say in the same introduction that as soon as your brother began work on Yoshe Kalb *his health and his whole bodily appearance improved. This was after several disappointments*

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and depressions. Do you think there is a connection between creativity and vitality, both physical and spiritual?

SINGER: There is no question about it. Listen. For a creative man—not only in the field of literature but in every field (I don't think that only writers are creative, all people are creative)—if you have a chance to create something this is surely healthy for you. It gives you vigour, it gives you hope. When a day passes by and I feel that I didn't do anything I feel at the end that this was a futile day. So, of course, the moment my brother began to write *Yoshe Kalb* and he read to me these chapters and I saw that they were fiery chapters, fiery with action and folklore and tension, he was a different man. In addition I knew (and he perhaps also knew) that Abe Cahan would publish it and he would get money for it. We all need to make some money to live. Even the greatest, even Dostoevsky and Flaubert, they all wanted to get some reward.

—But there is also a spiritual reward, a kind of immortality.

SINGER: In a way, in a way. I mean all creative people want to create a kind of artificial immortality. And this is true not only about creative people, but all people. The man who has children feels that by having children he is immortal. His body will disappear, but his genes go on: and the children will remember him, and even if they will not remember him his genes will be there to remind them. Animals don't think about being remembered, but they still are. The cow of today has the genes of the cow which has lived a million years ago. When the rooster crows you feel in his crowing that he is saying something which his great-great-great grandfather has already crowed. It's all in the past, you see. In my case, of course, when I write a book and I think that people will read it I feel that I'm boring myself into the future, if I'm not too boring. But actually there is a continuum in life: while the body's dying the human spirit, or human genes, or humanity is continuing to live. Never stops for a moment.

I BELIEVE *that just before he wrote* Yoshe Kalb *Israel Joshua Singer renounced Yiddish and declared that he was no longer going to be a Yiddish writer.*

SINGER: It was as if a man would decide: I'm not going to be myself any more but am going to be another human being. He cannot make such a decision. A man cannot decide that he is going to be not himself . . . although here there are a few thousand men who decided to become women. Anyhow it is easier for them to become women, or for a woman to become a man, than for my brother to become a German or a French writer. Yiddish was the language which he knew best; and Jewish life was the kind of life which he knew best. For him to say, I'm not going to be a Yiddish writer any more was sheer nonsense, and he knew it. I told it to him, and all his friends told it to him. So when he was able to forget about this kind of childish promise and to come to work again he was happy; and when this book was a mighty success in the *Forverts* and he got money for it, he was even more happy. So he went back to Yiddish literature, and this was the only way he could have functioned; what else could he have done? What he said about stopping to be a Yiddish writer was nothing but a kind of a protest. It's as sometimes people say, I'm ashamed to be a human being. But ashamed or not you still remain a human being.

—In fact of course all your brother's novels were written in Yiddish. And all your books, despite their popularity in English, first appear in Yiddish. But Yiddish is now in an extraordinary position as a language, in that it is a language without a country.

SINGER: Without a country. But even this maybe is not completely true because the Jews in Poland lived for some six hundred years. And how old do you think the Polish language is? Not much older. And how old is English? Not much older. In other words, they did have a territory. Of course when they emigrated from Poland to America they were no longer in their home. Yet the same happened to other languages. The Poles in America don't have their old territory but still they publish books in Polish and they have Polish organisations. In nature there isn't such a thing as an exception, because if it exists it is connected somewhere with the rules; and the rules themselves are sometimes exceptions. Some people maintain that Yiddish is "an exception" among languages. This is absolutely not true. It is a language like any other language. In Germany, most probably, it had its beginnings; and then it developed, and keeps on developing and changing; just like any other language. Some people say that Yiddish cannot be translated, the Yiddish idiom cannot be translated. The truth is that no idiom can be wholly translated. If you don't get the best equivalent you take the next best. To be sure, since Yiddish is connected with Jewish life, and Jewish life is strange to the rest of Europe, it is kind of "strange"; but there are many lives which are strange. We don't know much about the people in Albania or China or Tibet. But basically Yiddish has all the laws and idiosyncrasies and folklore, and all the juices, of any other language.

—However, doesn't your peculiar situation as a

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writer give you the opportunity to create the country in which Yiddish is spoken?

SINGER: I am the country. I myself am a little country. If I speak Yiddish, and this is my language, here I am. This room here is the country of Yiddish. Where is it written that it has to be a large country? How many people spoke English in the time of Shakespeare? Only a few million. And how many people could read and write? Even less. And today when you take Denmark or Finland, their territories are very limited. The only thing is that many languages have disappeared altogether—they have vanished in history—while the Jews have a good memory. I once said about the Jews, they suffer from all kinds of ailments but amnesia is not one of them. We don't forget.... Take Aramaic: there certainly is no territory for Aramaic today. No one speaks Aramaic. Except we Jews still hold on to this language. We use it in our marriage certificates and in our divorce papers; the *Zohar* was written in Aramaic, and the Talmud is a mixture of Aramaic and Hebrew. We don't forget things. And I'm sure that we are not going to forget Yiddish. Literature is very much connected with the people for whom the books were written. Of course if the Jewish people stop speaking Yiddish, Yiddish books will become more and more of a rarity. You will find them only in libraries, and professors will play around with them. But for the time being Yiddish literature is being translated in many languages. Just today I received some books from Japan, with my stories translated into Japanese characters.

—Since the world of the "shtetl", the world of Eastern European Jewry, is no more, I wonder if you feel a certain responsibility in recreating it? In short, do you feel that its existence now depends in some way upon your talents?

SINGER: I don't think this life depends upon me. No one fly makes a summer. I would say I am creating the past the way I see it, another writer the way he sees it, and the historians are doing it in their own way. But all this writing cannot really recreate this very life. One day of life is bigger than the whole of literature is. Spinoza says in his *Ethics* that there is always something left from everything which has lived, from everything which has existed. And so I believe too that the Jews of Poland have not completely disappeared; there's something left of them. And what I do in my writing, and other writers do in their writing, is an addition to that which was left. It's hard for me to believe that all generations are dead and only we are alive. I feel that if they are dead so are we, and if we are alive so are they. You know the bodies of all these people might have died, but something—call it spirit, or whatever—is still somewhere in the universe. This is a mystical kind of feeling; but I feel there is truth in it, although there is no scientific evidence that it is so.

—You said that the one thing Jews do not suffer from is amnesia. But you have also said in one of your short stories: "An atavism has taken hold of us Jews and is even stronger than the instinct for life." You are writing about the mood in Israel. Don't you think there is a danger in dwelling in the past?

SINGER: There's no danger of living in the past. Because while the Jew remembers what happened he doesn't stop living now. If you find a man with a great memory this man lives in the present too; even the memory is present; the memory itself is not in the past. As a matter of fact the more memory a human being has the more he is alive: because life itself is memory. If a person suddenly forgot the past, and could only live in the present, he would become an animal not a human. Memory is the very zest of life, it keeps the years together. When two people who love one another speak all the time about how they met five years ago, this does not mean that they are living in the past. They love one another now, and for this reason go back to the past. If they stopped loving they wouldn't talk again and again about that beautiful day when they met, and how they were bashful, and how they finally dared to come together....

So if you say that the Zionists are living in the past this is far from true. The very fact that Jews could after two thousand years revive a language, and go back to a country which they left two thousand years before is such a unique case in history, this is such an exception that it's the exception of all exceptions, sociologically, psychologically. If we can do this, this means that our roots are deeper than the roots of any other people. Show me another people who has wandered the world for two thousand years and gone back to its own ancient land and remembered its language.

The past is the very essence of today, and of the future. This is the reason why people want so much to find their "roots", because without their roots there is no presence.

—Isn't that one of the paradoxes of being a modern Jew? Belonging to an ancient people, yet in all probability not knowing the names of our great-grandparents. It seems to me that the courage of these anonymous people is beginning to interest many Jewish writers, who feel that to be an American is too safe an option. For example, Philip Roth, who commutes between New York and Prague.

SINGER: Oh, Czechoslovakia will help him very little because there are very few Jews in

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Czechoslovakia. He is investigating Kafka, not the Jews of Czechoslovakia. Kafka himself was an assimilated Jew; and Kafka is no longer there. What you find in Czechoslovakia now are graves, not people who speak Yiddish.

For a time the modern Jew believed in assimilation. He thought that he had been compelled to be a Jew by anti-Semitic enemies. Once people all became socialists, radicals, internationalists, no one would have to worry about the past. No Jew would have to call himself Jew; we would all be united and all march towards the happy future in which the past would be forgotten. But it is this point of view which is already forgotten: because assimilation is no answer to any problem.

Why do we write history, why do we make movies, why do we publish books? All so that the past should not be forgotten.

—Many immigrants, when they came to write their memoirs, compared their arrival in America with a rebirth. I can understand how it was a reprieve from a death sentence, but to call it a "rebirth" seems to be writing off a whole culture. Was the past in Poland really so insignificant and so easy to shrug off for these people?

SINGER: The Jews of Poland, even though they lived in a hostile world, still had their roots. They had been living there for six or seven hundred years, and no anti-Semite could deny this. They were there, built synagogues, spoke their own language, had their own customs and their own religion. The Poles might not have liked it but the Jew actually created his own world there. The Jew in America came with the idea of assimilation. Stop being a *greenhorn*—this was the first commandment when you came to America. Forget your roots, forget the past. Not only did the people in the street preach this but the newspapers too. The *Forverts* and all the others. So the Jew here was actually, theoretically, an assimilationist. He said, I may be a *greenhorn* but my children will not be *greenhorns*. I speak Yiddish; they will speak, with God's help, perfect English.

Of course there were Jews in Poland who stopped talking Yiddish, who despised it. They spoke only Polish; but they were a small minority. The average Jew in Poland spoke his language, didn't try to adjust himself to the Poles. There he didn't mind being a *greenhorn* for six hundred years, whereas the American Jew was so much afraid of being a *greenhorn* that he was ready (in the beginning) to spit out his whole little Jewishness. But now the Jews of America have learnt that you cannot get rid of your roots, cannot deny them; there is no sense and no dignity in it. A dignified man does not want to lose his roots, or to adjust himself to others because the others are more numerous or richer. If you have a little home and your neighbour has a large home you don't want, if you are a genuine human being, to get rid of your home and live there under his bed or in his cellar. You say my home is still my castle. This is how the Jews now begin to feel in America. And the American gentile has great respect for Jews who don't deny their Jewishness; they themselves feel that an assimilationist is nothing but a mimicker and an aper, and no one wants to be mimicked by other people. When I go to universities and lectures—I'm often invited by some very conservative institutions—I speak about my grandfather the Rabbi, and about Bilgoray, and about Radzymin, all these little towns. I don't show any sign of trying to make them believe that I came here with the *Mayflower* or that my grandfather was on board. And they accept me, and they even give me doctorates. I've convinced myself that people who try to deny their roots are always jittery and ashamed. They're ashamed of the very fact that they're alive. I disapprove of such people. I consider them cowards.

ISRAEL JOSHUA SINGER *came to America in 1934 for obvious reasons. How did he take to life in New York?*

SINGER: My brother loved America. Even more than I do. Because he had lived in Poland longer than I did and he saw the difference. Sometimes I quarrelled with my brother. I said to him: you are exaggerating, it's not such a paradise as you say, there's not as much justice as you imagine. He was really dazzled by America. To be sure he also had his disappointments. But he always used to say, "No matter how poor a man in this country is he has a bathroom." I don't think that America had many such patriots as my brother was.

—I ask you because I've just read a book which suggests that at the time of his death your brother was planning to leave America for Palestine, as it then was.

SINGER: *Ach!* There's not a word of truth in it. He *might* have—you know, when a man is in a mood he'll say, "I wish I would go to Israel." But not seriously. He wanted to stay in America. Of course the Hitler war brought deep disappointment in my brother's life because he knew what was going on in Europe. He wasn't disappointed in America, he was disappointed in the human race. He considered America an oasis in a wilderness (although there was plenty of wilderness here too).

—Indeed, it was your brother who persuaded you to come to America.

SINGER: He didn't have to use much persuasion. In the 1930s the situation in Poland was terrible. Nazi

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leaders used to come to Poland to go hunting, and they had meetings with some Poles. There was in Poland a fascist party, a pro-Nazi party. And I knew, with many others, that once the Nazis marched into Poland the Jews could only expect tragedy. I had a job then as a proof-reader in a Yiddish magazine, and our situation and in all the Yiddish publishing companies was so terrible that I could not make a living. The whole situation was very precarious.

America was considered "the Golden Land", and my brother whom I loved was there. So the moment my brother left I had only one idea: to come to America, the sooner the better. When my brother sent me an affidavit this was for me the greatest happiness. But then the US consul appeared not to be in a rush to give me a visa. I did get a tourist visa (not a permanent visa, because for a permanent visa there was a quota and you had to wait for years). So my brother didn't need, as I said, to work very hard to persuade me to come.

—How was it when you first settled in New York?

SINGER: I felt terribly confused. I saw that here Yiddish was not becoming richer but poorer. I saw hundreds of objects for which Yiddish had no name. Because Yiddish was created in Poland, not here. I lived through a real crisis. I stopped writing for six or seven years, doing only articles for the *Forverts*. But then after a few years I said to myself, if I have something to say, or a story to tell, I should do it instead of going around in despair, worrying why are we not as rich in every way as others are. Poverty is nothing to be ashamed of, even if it is spiritual poverty. But Yiddish is not spiritually poor. It has certain treasures which other languages don't have (just as the others have treasures which we don't have).

—At the time of your arrival in America your brother was a celebrity in the Yiddish world, and beyond. The English translation of The Brothers Ashkenazi *ran through eleven editions. Now you are the celebrity, if I may use such a word. Perhaps there is an explanation for this in the fact that your brother wrote about Stalin, Hitler, and other mortal devils, whereas you deal with immortal imps and demons—with human instinct, as opposed to history.*

SINGER: When I began to write critics considered me a perfect anachronism. They said, you are a writer about Jews who lived two hundred years ago, and about *dybbuks* in which people don't believe. My editor Abe Cahan scolded me. But somehow these imps have become very fashionable nowadays, so it's not my fault. It is like a man who wears a suit for fifty years, it has already become old-fashioned, and then the fashion goes back and his lapels are again in style. But he doesn't do it to be fashionable, he just is a man who likes to keep wearing those clothes. I write in my own way. Whether I'm fashionable and whether I will become unfashionable next year does not bother me at all. I was already forty-six before they translated me into English. I had made peace with the idea that I am going to stay a Yiddish writer till the end of my life and to be known only to the Yiddish readers. It didn't bother me much. Of course I wanted to be translated, but I didn't foresee that it would happen.

If I would say that I will remain popular forever, this would be boasting and I'm not going to do this. All I can say is, I wish it would be so. I certainly wouldn't mind. Most probably what happens to a writer, to a real writer, is that he's fashionable, and then he's forgotten, and then there is a revival. If he's truly good somehow he's not going to be completely forgotten. I believe that my brother's books will be popular again. If they will not be now they will be so in the future.

—Your brother tells in Of A World That Is No More, *his book of memoirs, how he accidentally dropped you on your head when you were still a baby. Being flippant, do you think that's what set you off on your career as a writer?*

SINGER: Well, you never know what nature does. I read about a case where a man got a blow on his head and suddenly became clairvoyant. So it's possible. But I would say that the genes play a bigger part. I've had many bumps on the head and somehow they didn't make me a genius. I'll try again.

—Maybe you'll become clairvoyant.

SINGER: Oh, clairvoyant. For a clairvoyant I would really bump myself fifty times. These things may happen, but very seldom. The genes are very old and they play the biggest part. You can't bump a gene. No, you can bump them but it still remains a gene.

YOU ARE OF COURSE *very interested in the supernatural. In one of your stories you tell how the imps and demons, newly arrived in America from Poland, were startled by the traffic and the subway. Have they become acclimatised? And do you still believe in them after more than forty years in the USA?*

SINGER: Yes. Yes. Yes. I really believe that what we know about life is an infinitesimal part of life itself. This is true about the body, and true about the spirit, and true about all aspects of life. Now, say, three hundred years ago no one would have believed that in a bit of mud there are millions of

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living microbes and bacteria. So many microbes in a little mud? And no one would have believed that electricity would be able to heat your room, to cool your room, to move your machines. For the last few hundred years so many powers have been discovered, so many. So why should we think that we have now reached the summit of knowledge, and that this is the limit? Nonsense. Children going to school five hundred years from now will know thousands of things which we today don't know, and which if someone told us about them we would say, impossible. Every day impossible things become possible. So what we call actually supernatural means the things that we don't know today but we may know in the future, or we may never know because we are surrounded with so many secrets that no matter how many discoveries which we are going to make we will still not discover the whole. Because this is our human spirit, this is the human mind—it cannot take the whole thing. It can only discover parts; we discover parts of the atom; we discover certain truths about our brain; but even if civilisation or human culture will last another ten thousand years we will not have discovered the whole thing. Because nature is infinite not only in quantity but in quality. And because of this the idea that ghosts and spirits and hobgoblins (and what-have-you) may exist—today it is supernatural; it may one day be a part of nature.

—*In your autobiographical book,* In My Father's Court, *you describe how people would come to your father, the Rabbi, with their problems and he would listen to them. Also many of your stories begin when a person approaches you with a tale to tell. Do you feel that you may have taken over your father's role? In a secular sense.*

SINGER: I wouldn't call myself a rabbi. But I'm very much interested in stories: since I believe that the story is the very essence of literature, and that life itself is a story. In other words, the story of your life is the very essence of your life. I'm always eager to hear stories because no matter how many stories I've heard they have never revealed all of life to me. Whenever I think for a moment or have the illusion that I know human beings, I know that I don't know. You may know a human being for twenty years and still many surprises are waiting for you. Of course, my father was interested from a religious point of view in these people. My interest is from the point of view of literature: actually, life itself. But being interested in other people is life. If you send a person away to an island and he remains completely alone he becomes so miserable he loses all ambitions, all passion, he cannot function. We are interested in the story of life. Since every human being is unique, every human being is a lesson in life; and every day of this human being is a new lesson of life. The Almighty was a great enough artist to create individuality in everything.

—*What do you think attracts people to you with their stories?*

SINGER: I will tell you. People love to tell their stories—when there is an ear which hears, someone who listens to them with a certain understanding. If you tell a person a story and the person will begin to call you names and say, What! you did this? or, You are a rascal, the person will stop telling. When he tells you a story he wants to feel that you have some sympathy with his story, that even though he might have done wrong you understand it and you are more or less forgiving. This is the kind of a listener I am. When a person tells me a story I am not sitting in judgment. I listen and try to understand. And I myself, if people ask me about my life, I'm also eager to tell my story. I've seen people who like to listen to other people's stories, but when you ask them something they say, it's not your business. This is to me a mean person. If you are interested in other men's lives, another person is justified in being interested in yours. As a matter of fact in all my writing I tell the story of my life, again and again. Sometimes I repeat myself. This is what good writers always did. They always told their story, in many many phases. Only the dilettantes try to be universal; a real writer knows that he's connected with a certain people, a certain time, a certain environment, and there he stays. There he stays put, I would say, and he doesn't mind it because there is enough to investigate and to learn even from a small world, a limited environment.

I NOTICE *there is a typewriter on your desk. A rather old machine. Is that what you use to write your stories?*

SINGER: This typewriter which you see here is 43 years old. I bought it in 1935. It is barely functioning, but it works. I compel it to function, because it's almost impossible today to get a Yiddish typewriter. There it stands. When I go to Miami I take it, and I'm always afraid that it will be broken en route, because they throw valises here. But somehow when I arrive I take it out and I put it down and it still works. I consider it a miracle. This typewriter is also very capricious. If I write a story which the typewriter doesn't like it stops working. It says, it's not my duty to write such a story like this. That this typewriter can still do its work is to me really sometimes like a miracle.

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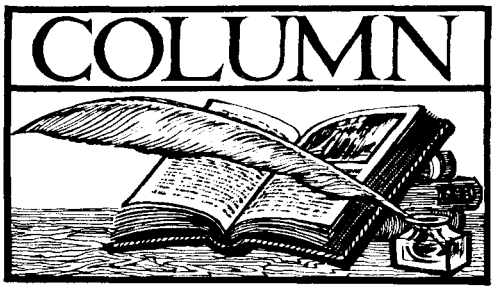

IN AN ARTICLE published in *The Times*, before its suspension, on the 60th anniversary of the Armistice of 11 November 1918, Mr John Terraine took the opportunity of destroying many of the myths which have grown up, particularly in Britain, around the Great War of 1914–1918. Of course no one any longer believes in the legend of the Angel of Mons, which was manufactured in order to give British arms the advantage of direct Divine intervention. But people still, after 60 years, continue to believe, for instance, that in some way the Great War was destructive and wasteful of human life to a degree unparalleled in history or that the battlefields of the Western Front were dominated by "the machine gun", of which Paul Fussell in his *The Great War and Modern Memory* has only recently written that

> "the machine gun alone makes it [the Great War] so special and unexampled that it simply can't be talked about as if it was one of the conventional wars of history. . . ."

Then there is the equally legendary belief in the neglect and misuse of what Lord Beaverbrook called "the wonderful war-winning weapon, the Tank." This is attributed to the stupidity and incompetence of the British High Command, which in turn is to be accounted for by the myth that (as Mr A. J. P. Taylor says) most British generals were cavalrymen, "The Donkeys" (as Mr Alan Clarke has named them in the title of his much praised book on British generalship in the Great War), and therefore out of their depth in a modern war. Most of all perhaps there is the general belief in the "futility" of the War, which was fought for no conceivably justifiable end.

All these myths continue to colour our overall picture of the Great War. Mr Terraine, with a rare mastery of the available evidence, has little difficulty in disposing of them. He shows, for instance, that though the carnage of the Great War was indeed terrible enough, costing 13,000,000 dead on both sides, it cannot be compared with the casualties of the Second World War, which involved an estimated total of 53,000,000 dead, of which 13,600,000 were contributed by the Soviet Union alone, not including an estimated total of 7,000,000 Soviet civilians killed. As for the myth of the domination of the battlefield by "the machine gun", casualty lists show that the artillery inflicted far more deaths and far worse wounds than the machine gun and that, as in the Second World War, it was the artillery, not the machine gun, which was queen of the battlefield.

In the same way, Mr Terraine demonstrates that the "wonderful war-winning weapon", the Tank, was even by 1918 a clumsy, inefficient and highly vulnerable machine, with a maximum road speed of 8.3 mph and lucky if it could achieve 1.5 mph across the crater-pocked battlefields of Flanders; while if British generals are blamed for misusing tanks in "penny packets", it was because until the very end they were in fact only available in "penny packets", even though the arch "donkey" himself, the British Commander-in-Chief, Sir Douglas Haig, had demanded 1,000 of them as early as 1916.

Haig, of course, was indeed a cavalryman; and so was his predecessor, Sir John French. But in this respect they were wholly unrepresentative of the British High Command as a whole. By the simple expedient of consulting the Army List, which identifies every British commissioned officer, Mr Terraine shows that, in July 1914, of eight Field-Marshals, two came from the cavalry, of eighteen generals only one, of twenty-seven lieutenant-generals three, and of 114 major-generals eight. If British offensives on the Western Front, in a war in which everything favoured the defence, repeatedly failed, at terrible cost, to achieve their objectives, it was less because of their commanders' stupidity inherited from training in obsolete types of warfare, than because of the altogether unprecedented problems presented by a war which was in fact unique. It was, Mr Terraine says,

> ". . . the first war of aviation, the first real undersea war, the first war of the internal combustion engine, therefore the first war of the mechanics, the first war of wireless telegraphy, the first of the two great artillery wars, the first war of gas, the first war of napalm (flame-throwers), the first war of mass-production, mass-logistics and mass-administration."

It is not surprising if it was only after long, hard, and bitter lessons that commanders learned to exploit the opportunities offered by this first great war of technology to their own advantage.

Finally, with regard to the "futility" of the war itself, Mr Terraine points out what the Allies had to fear if it were lost. The Carthaginian peace treaties imposed by the Germans in 1918 on the defeated Russians and Rumanians provide a model of what the Allies had to expect if Ludendorff's great spring offensive of 1918 had succeeded. By the treaty of Brest-Litovsk, Russia lost 34% of her population, 32% of her agricultural land, 54% of her industry, and 89% of her coal mines.

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MR TERRAINE'S EXPOSURE of so many myths of the Great War is indeed a devastating one. Yet it is doubtful whether it will be enough to destroy a version of history which is by now so firmly established that it has become a part of British folk-memory which, between the Wars, exercised a profound, and fatal, influence on British foreign policy. The establishment of such myths is all the more remarkable because, after all, the Great War ended in the total and unconditional defeat of Germany by the Western Allies, and their adoption as an article of faith only helped to popularise and propagate the German counter-myth that the German Armies were never defeated in the field but were betrayed by the "stab in the back" delivered by treacherous politicians on the home front.

This was, of course, as contrary to the truth as any of the myths exposed by Mr Terraine. The German Army continued to fight stubbornly and tenaciously; but by the autumn of 1918 it was no longer the magnificent fighting-machine it had once been and was incapable of offering any effective or coherent resistance to the triumphant advance of the Allies. In that advance, the British Army (and its Dominion associates) played a predominant part, displaying, after four terrible years, a sustained self-confidence, élan, and high morale which none of its Allies could by then equal, and accomplishing feats of arms which by any standard must be counted as outstanding; the crossing, for instance, of the almost impassable St Quentin Canal at Bellicourt by the 46th (North Midland) Division of the Territorial Army, which broke the Hindenburg line, equalled or surpassed anything achieved by any army during the whole of the War.

Moreover, it was the super-"donkey" Haig who, together with Foch, had most clearly grasped the possibility of victory in 1918, as opposed to the politicians at home, who had resigned themselves to yet another year, or more, of indecisive stalemate until the Americans were ready to play an effective part in the War. "None of us will live to see the end of the war", said Lord Northcliffe in September 1918, when Germany already faced total defeat. Haig's offensive in 1918 was an achievement of which any army might be proud and any nation might regard as an imperishable episode in its history; and it was a vital element in this victory that, despite all their bitter experiences under his command, Haig never lost the confidence of his troops and in 1918 knew he could rely upon them to respond to any demands made upon them, in a way that the French, for instance, no longer could.

IT IS, HOWEVER, one of the ironies of history that the brilliant offensive of 1918 has been completely overshadowed in the popular imagination by the indecisive, costly, and bloody battles that had preceded it. In this respect we have been badly served both by military historians and by creative writers, who have paid little attention to the overwhelming victory of the Allies on the Western front in 1918, as compared with the enormous literature devoted to the trench warfare of the previous four years. For the most part they have treated victory as a kind of inevitable, and slightly boring, anti-climax to everything that went before, whereas the truth is that it took everyone by surprise except the soldiers themselves.

Here again Mr Terraine comes to our rescue. His article in *The Times* might be regarded as a kind of prelude, or introductory survey, to his new book: *To Win a War: 1918, The Year of Victory.*[1] It constitutes by far the best and fullest account I have read of the victorious Allied advance, in which throughout he emphasises how much their victories should be a source of continuing pride to the British people in the performance of their armies under Haig's command. The truth is that in 1918 Haig and his forces scented victory in the air, as compared with the profound gloom and pessimism which ruled among their political masters at home.

Mr Terraine's book, like his article, is a valuable corrective to the many legends which continue to dominate people's minds with regard to the Great War. It may be that one should look for their origins in something quite different from what actually happened on the battlefields. Perhaps people already foresaw, with a sense of foreboding, that the Great War, even though it ended in victory, was the beginning of that continuous decline in Britain's political and military power which has continued until the present day, and which victory in another World War has done nothing to halt. But if this is so, there is no longer any reason for believing that this inexorable historical process was in any way due to the failures of either the British Army or of its commanders in the field. Perhaps it is too late now to eradicate from people's minds the largely mistaken views, which have prevailed for so long, of what actually happened on the battlefields of Flanders. But at least it is some satisfaction that the record should be put straight.

★

IT SEEMS HARD TO BELIEVE that, as I write, *The Times* has at last actually suspended publication. But then, very many things are hard to credit today. It is reality, not works of the imagination, which today require of us a suspension of disbelief, and, what is more, one that is not temporary but continuous and unbroken.

On one single day, last week, I could hardly believe my eyes or my ears when in the newspapers I read accounts, first, of the proceedings against Mr Jeremy Thorpe and others on a charge of con-

[1] *To Win a War: 1918, The Year of Victory.* By JOHN TERRAINE. Sidgwick & Jackson, £7.95.

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spiracy to murder; then the barbarous internecine devastations along the Uganda-Tanzania war border communities; and, then, of the mass suicide of nearly a thousand of Mr Jim Jones's followers in Guyana, followed in the evening by a television programme in the BBC's *Panorama* series predicting, accurately, that by then suspension of publication by *The Times* had become inevitable.

There was a time, not so very long ago, when any of these reports, taken alone, would have provoked incredulity. Today we take them jointly and singly for granted. Yet their coincidence on a single day gave me a slightly sinister feeling that there must be some hidden and esoteric connection between them. But there was also the feeling, no less creepy, that if indeed there were such a connection, and one could identify it correctly, one would on the whole prefer not to, because the conclusions one would have to draw would be at once so alarming and so depressing that life would hardly be worth living.

The truth is that today reality, whose colour and grain and texture we absorb at every moment of our lives, has so far outrun men's capacity to understand and master it that in their efforts to do so they only make matters worse. This may seem the most extravagant of paradoxes in an age when men have achieved a greater mastery and control over nature than they ever had before; but perhaps this mastery has given men such a sense of their own omnipotence that it has driven them out of their senses, so that all we are left with is the grimy evidence in a magistrates' court and the dead bodies in African and South American jungles.

PERHAPS, in such a situation, it is foolish or sentimental to make too much of the démise, even if only temporary, of *The Times*. Yet one cannot even be sure that its démise will be only temporary; though everyone will surely wish to believe in the claim, or the promise, that once its present difficulties are overcome, *The Times* will rise again like a phoenix from its ashes. But one cannot help remembering that phoenixes, if they ever existed, were always a rare species and that there are good reasons for thinking that, especially in Fleet Street, they may have become extinct.

This will of course only add to the immediate sense of loss and deprivation which millions of readers throughout the world will feel at the disappearance of *The Times* from their doorsteps or their post-boxes every morning. It is perhaps the best tribute one could pay to *The Times* that such feelings are in many cases intensely personal ones, as if some old friend had suddenly vanished, even though he was the kind of friend who can sometimes irritate, bore, exasperate or, on occasions, quite simply infuriate one. In journalism the proof of the pudding is in the eating; and there are few newspapers which have ever succeeded in creating that particular bond of intimacy which existed between *The Times* and its readership.

The reasons for regret at its suspension are of course many. One is simply that *The Times* was, by any standard, one of the best newspapers in the world. It was one of the few institutions in Britain today which showed that there are still some things at which we are very good indeed, perhaps better than anybody, and since such examples of excellence are rare, its loss is all the more to be deplored. An excellence lost is not easily recovered.

There is another element which enters into one's sense of loss. No doubt it is tinctured by nostalgia; but in the course of its long history *The Times* had established itself as one of the most characteristic of British products, and in this sense was one of the pillars on which a particular way of life depended. It would perhaps be too much to say that by its suspension one of those pillars has been destroyed, but it has certainly been weakened, and since *The Times* has always played a leading and vital part in the existence of a free press in this country, it is difficult not to feel that not only its readers but an entire society has suffered a deprivation.

It was not, of course that *The Times* was beyond criticism, or even at certain periods, outright condemnation. I myself, as a young man in the 1930s, once worked for it for a short time in its sub-editing room, which was then regarded as the best possible kind of nursery school or kindergarten for budding journalists, particularly if they came from All Souls, which under first George Buckle and then Geoffrey Dawson had established an almost hereditary right to its editorship. But it was a period in which *The Times*, in its support of the policy of appeasement, of which I violently disapproved, manipulated its foreign news coverage in the most unjustifiable way; so that it was not long before *The Times* and I both discovered that we had very little use for one another. Yet I still remember the sub-editing room with affection and respect. It was indeed a remarkable institution, which instilled into one habits of accuracy, respect for fact, and clarity of expression which are indispensable to any journalist. It often used to remind me more of a research institution than a newspaper office.

Fortunately, *The Times* and I were both equally glad to part company, and this has in no way diminished my respect, affection, and admiration for it as an indispensable part of life as it has been lived in these islands, and in this I am sure I am joined by all its readers who, at this moment, find themselves so unhappily deprived of it.

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Anthony Thwaite

Messages from Government House

The Punjab war is done: in all the land
No man in arms against us. Those who bolted
Got through the Khyber Pass and go on running.
They came like thieves and dash away like thieves.
The Maharajah and the Council signed
Submission yesterday, the British colours
Were hoisted on the Citadel of Lahore,
The Koh-i-noor surrendered to our Queen,
And the Punjab—each inch of it—proclaimed
A portion of our Empire. What I have done
Is my responsibility. I know it
Just, politic, and necessary; my conscience
Tells me the work is one I pray that God
May bless; and with tranquillity I await
My country's sanction and my Queen's approval.
It is not every day an officer
Adds to the British Empire such a prize—
Four million subjects, and the priceless jewel
Of Mogul Emperors to his Sovereign's crown.
This I have done—but do not think that I
Exult unduly: I do not. But when
I feel conviction honestly that this deed
Is for the glory of my land, the honour
Of her most noble majesty, the good
Of those whom I have brought under her rule,
Fitly I may indulge a sentiment
Of honourable pride. Glory to God
For what has been achieved.
Some other matters:
A curious discovery at Rangoon—
Digging an old pagoda to make way
For army barracks, our men came across
Gold images and bracelets, with a scroll
Showing these things were put there by a queen
Five hundred years ago. In all such places
One or more images are found of Buddha:
Our fellows call them "Tommies." There are few
Pagodas to be seen without a hole
Made by ingenious Britons in their search
For Tommies. I am sorry to report—

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Accessory after the fact, you know—
I purchased secretly myself some bits
Of this mythology when first I reached
Burmah.
I have a sad death to report—
Bold as his sword, high-minded, kindly, pure,
Devoted to his calling, Mountain is gone.
A Christian soldier, died as he lived. He rests
In the old cemetery at Futteghur.
His widow's on her way here; he'll go home
By the next steamer.
I have just received
A packet of the rhododendron seeds
Despatched from Kooloo, which the Duchess wished,
And trust they will do well.
The troops have driven
Moung Goung Gyee out of the Irawaddi:
They took him in the jungle—took his gong,
His gold umbrella and his wife. A pity
The man himself escaped. The place is quiet.

From Barrackpore to Simla, from Peshawar
To Kunawar and Chini, from the camp
At Umritsur to Attok, there is peace.
The reinforcements from Madras have come,
So now I calculate 14,000 men
(5,000 Europeans) are there, thirteen
Steamers upon the river, besides marines
And many sailors. Opium stands high—
On each *per mensem* sale the Government
Gains well. The punishment we meted out
To Rani and to Bunnoo is rewarded—
The Rani people whom Sir Colin thrashed
Last May, destroying valley, stoup and roup,
Have just come in with turbans in their hands
Begging forgiveness, offering allegiance,
Submitting to our fortress. Our success
In sowing dissension between tribe and tribe,
'Twixt Mussulman and Sikh, Hindoo and all,
Is clear: suspicion reigns, and union
Is hopeless between any. Peace and plenty!

* * * * *

Just as the office mail was going out,
A rising in Bengal among the hills—
Barbarous folk, though usually timid,
Armed just with bows and arrows: some say greed,
Some say fanaticism, some ill-treatment
By those who build the railway. Troops are there
And closing in. The trouble has not spread
And soon should be put down. But what vexation
Just at the close of my career . . . .
Dear friend,
Before I lay the sceptre down I plan
To show the court in a most frank despatch
What has been done in India these eight years—
And left undone. I look things in the face.
"Opus exegi": taking leave of those
I ruled over, tomorrow I embark.
"The Friend of India" some months ago
Called me "not personally popular."
If that is true—'tis not for me to say—
Never were full and copious tears so shed
Over a man *unpopular*, wiped away
By bearded men . . . .
I am quite done; my leg
Gives pain continually. Let Canning do
The best he can: the brightest jewel of all
In our imperial crown weighs heavily.
Less easy every day the burden lies—
Annex one province, two others will rise up
Like hydra-headed monsters, their partition
A parturition. What will be born of this?
Rumours and panics and religious wrath
At a few cartridges . . . and "hope deferred"
At Delhi, given time, indeed one day
"Makes the heart sick" in England. Blow away
The rebels from our cannons, still there hangs
A cloud of blood above the hills and vales,
Ganges, and Indus, and my lost domains.

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The Idea of the "Cold War" and its Prophets

On Tocqueville & Others—By THEODORE DRAPER

THE FIRST and most famous prophet of the post-World War II "Cold War" between Russia and America is often thought to be Alexis de Tocqueville. He was not. There were others who preceded him and who came much closer to the basic idea, and they also help to put into better perspective what Tocqueville actually did say about the destinies of Russia and America. If there is still so much admiration for and wonder at Tocqueville's pronouncement, these largely forgotten prophets should be of very special interest.

Tocqueville's prognosis in the last sentence of the first part of his *Democracy in America* in 1835 has long been something of an enigma. The forecast that "each", Russia and America, "seems called by some secret design of Providence one day to hold in its hands the destinies of half the world" appears to come out of nowhere.[1] The reader is not prepared for it by anything he has previously been told. Russia is only once mentioned briefly in another connection.[2] Tocqueville paid relatively little attention to America's foreign interests, affairs, or policies. Indeed, he seemed to have forgotten by the end of the second volume of 1835 what he had written earlier. In his first reference to foreign affairs, he had remarked that America had "no external interests" and was unlikely to exercise "a powerful influence on the world's destiny" because it was not controlled by an aristocracy, which he thought was necessary for such a role.[3] But in his climactic passage at the end of the volume he professed to believe that America would one day "become the leading naval power on the globe" and "rule the seas, as the Romans were [born] to conquer the world." He placed America in 1835, with Russia, "in the first rank of nations."[4] And then came the even more famous prophecy that America and Russia were fated to hold the destinies of half the world in each of their hands. It is hard to see how America could fail to be a powerful influence on the world's destinies, with or without an aristocracy, if it were to become the world's leading naval power, rule the seas, and take over the destinies of half the world while Russia took over the other half.

IT IS IMPORTANT to be clear about what Tocqueville did not say. He did not say or even imply that America and Russia were bound to clash or compete after each had achieved its semi-global destiny.[5] He was content to give each of them half the world and leave it at that. Just what he meant by "half the world" for each of them is more obscure. He gave some hint of the geography of the American half but none at all of the Russian half.

He predicted that, in the near future as the life of nations goes, the "Anglo-Americans" (as he called them) would cover "the whole of the immense area between the polar ice and the tropics, extending from the Atlantic to the Pacific coast." By this area he seems to have had in mind just about what the United States did finally occupy in the next decade,

[1] Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America* (tr. George Lawrence, ed. J. P. Mayer and Max Lerner (1966), p. 379). The older translation by George Reeve, which was alone in the field for over a century and may still be better known though much less accurate, gave the same passage as "each of them seems to be marked out by the will of Heaven to sway the destinies of half the globe." The first part of *De la Démocratie en Amérique* originally appeared in two volumes in 1835, the second part in another two volumes in 1840.

[2] *Democracy in America*, p. 286. Tocqueville seems to have been little concerned with Russia in later years. A German historian found only two more references to Russia in all Tocqueville's later works. Bernhard Fabian, *Alexis de Tocquevilles Amerikabild* (Heidelberg, 1957), p. 81, n. 3.

[3] *Democracy in America*, pp. 210, 212. James Bryce interpreted Tocqueville to mean: "It [America] is eminently ill-fitted to conduct foreign policy. Fortunately, it has none" *Studies in History and Jurisprudence* (1901), Vol. I, p. 395.

[4] In this case, I have gone back to the original French, which strikes me as more explicit than "among the leading nations" (Lawrence) or "a most prominent place amongst the nations" (Reeve).

[5] Just what term should be used for Tocqueville's conception of this division of the world can be a problem. Professor Golo Mann once referred to Tocqueville's "famous prophecy" of Russia's and America's "*Weltmacht-Zukunft*" ("Tocqueville und das Amerika von heute", in *Jahrbuch für Amerikastudien*, Vol. V, 1960, p. 23). If the term were not so misleading, "*Halb-Weltmacht Zukunft*" would be closer to Tocqueville's meaning.

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since he went on to define the area as eventually three-quarters the size of Europe.[6] It is reasonable to suppose, however, that he was here predicting the ultimate extension of the United States itself, not the entire half of the world which it was going to "hold in its hands." Tocqueville's American half was probably a sphere of influence taking in North and South America.

The Russian half is even more problematic. In his day, the question at issue was whether Russia was going to make itself the master of Western Europe. Asia and Africa were still outside the range of Russian ambitions and could not have been envisaged in either half. Tocqueville's expression of the division of the world between Russia and America is so loose and metaphorical that it is hard to know just what he had in mind.

In any case, there was nothing new about either the Russian or the American half of Tocqueville's prognosis.[7] This was not one of Tocqueville's presentiments, however, that attracted mention from his contemporaries. The most famous British review of Tocqueville's book by J. S. Mill (*London Review*) did not bother to mention it. Neither did J. G. Lockhart's equally lengthy essay (*The Quarterly Review*).[8] In the United States, the *American Quarterly Review* gently reproved Tocqueville for sometimes stepping "boldly into the region of prophecy, whose misty and uncertain confines we cannot overpass."[9] The *United States Magazine and Democratic Review*, the drumbeater of "manifest destiny" in the 1840s, cited Tocqueville's last paragraph without comment.[10]

The only significant exception that I have been able to find appeared in the *Revue des Deux Mondes*. It was written by a friend of Tocqueville's, François de Corcelle, who, however, protested against just this point. He was appalled by the idea that Russia would hold half the world, including Europe, in its hands. "No", he expostulated, "half the world will not be its prey" because the Russian "giant" lacked the right kind of "moral life", which was the sole condition for "high and powerful destinies." Corcelle caught the fatalistic note in Tocqueville's prognosis and did not like it, at least so far as Russia was concerned. Corcelle wanted European and American democracy to work together against Russia's "servile barbarism", a far closer approximation to the attitudes that animated the future Cold War.[11]

A somewhat different reason for rejecting Tocqueville's division of the world was given two decades later by Count Adam de Gurowski, a Polish émigré in America. Gurowski was a disillusioned pro-Russian Panslavist who became a fervent admirer of American democracy.

> "It has become very common of late [he wrote in his book *Russia As It Is*, published in New York in 1854] to compare the growth of America with that of Russia; to look for a similitude in their development and progress; and finally to divide the future of the two hemispheres between these two ascending states."

Gurowski would have none of this Tocquevillian perspective on the ground that there was "only one right line" towards the future and it was represented by free America, not despotic Russia. He claimed that as early as 1836, soon after the appearance of Tocqueville's first two volumes, he had already put himself on record as having allotted to Russia a different destiny—away from Europe towards Asia. He particularly looked forward to the Russian conquest of Turkey and even expected the Czarist court to move to Constantinople. This transplantation, he believed, would prove fatal to the Czarist régime but would lead to the salvation of the Russian people to whom Western ideas and culture would then make their way freely and irresistibly. In this curious way, Gurowski avoided the implied Tocquevillian takeover of Europe by Russia, settled the long-festering "Eastern Question", restored Europe to political supremacy over the Slavic world, and inferentially conducted both Russia and Europe along the "one right line" of ultimate American influence and example.

Apart from this response to Tocqueville's futurology and testimonial that it had become "very common of late" in the 1850s, Gurowski's grand design helps to recapture the visionary

[6] In 1835, Tocqueville noted, the United States extended over an area half that of Europe. He was almost exactly right in his prediction of the final American boundaries: Europe covers 4,000,000 square miles, the USA 3,022,387 square miles. In 1835, however, many still expected Canada to fall into the lap of the USA; Tocqueville must have had Canada in mind if he thought that the USA was going to extend as far north as the "polar ice." What he conceived of as the "tropics" is more uncertain. He seems to be referring to the "vast provinces extending beyond the frontiers of the Union toward Mexico", which would put it in the territory of Texas, where separatist sentiment among US settlers was already strong during Tocqueville's visit to the US.

[7] Auguries of universal Russian influence go back to Leibniz in the late 17th century (Fabian, pp. 82–85). On the American side, the famous last sentence by Alexander Hamilton in *The Federalist* (No. 11, 1787) had advised the newly independent states "to aim at an ascendant in the system of American affairs."

[8] *The London Review* (1836), pp. 85–129. *The Quarterly Review* (September 1836).

[9] *The American Quarterly Review* (March 1836), pp. 130–131. The review as a whole was patronisingly critical.

[10] *United States Magazine and Democratic Review* (October–December 1837), p. 95. This review was far more favourable.

[11] *Revue des Deux Mondes* (1 April 1835), pp. 739–741. There is an entry on Corcelle, including a statement about his friendship with Tocqueville, in *Dictionnaire de Biographie française* (1961), Vol. IX, p. 614.

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intellectual climate of the second quarter of the 19th century in which Tocqueville—as well as the Saint-Simonians, Fourier, Marx and many others—thought and dreamed.[12]

Gurowski was not the only European émigré in the United States in the 1850s to instruct Americans on Russia's destiny as well as their own. Two German émigrés, Theodore Poesche and Charles Goepp, put out a book in 1853 entitled *The New Rome; or The United States of the World,* in which, among other things, they held that Russia must conquer all of Europe after which it would come into final conflict with the United States.

> "The choirs are marshalled on each wing of the world's stage, Russia leading the one, the United States the other. Yet the world is too small for both, and the contest must end in the downfall of the one and the victory of the other."

So much for the novelty of the post-World War II theories of "convergence" and inevitable "struggle for the world"!

THE REAL FAME of Tocqueville's prognosis came more than a century later, brought on by the demonstrations of Russian and American power during and after the Second World War.

The sentence of 1835 was read again and remarkable previsions were found in it. In 1942, in the midst of the War, one American writer discovered that Tocqueville had foreseen the "Union Now" movement, which called for the unification of democratic countries the world over in preparation for a future world government. He also claimed that Tocqueville had "looked beyond the Russian Revolution and foreseen America and Russia holding the balance of power at Armageddon." The prospect of Armageddon was a strange extrapolation from Tocqueville's rather bare and matter-of-fact statement about the two halves. In 1949, the German writer, Ernst Jünger, interpreted Tocqueville as having forewarned that Germany would split into "Atlantic and continental" parts, an implication more Jünger's than Tocqueville's.[13] The latter had not given Germany any such option to escape from Russia's future half of the world.

In his large study of *America as a Civilization*, published in 1957, Max Lerner also thought that Tocqueville had accurately anticipated the post-World War II "polarising forces" of Russia and America.[14]

In 1962, in one of his major works, *Peace and War*, Raymond Aron, that most complete of contemporary Tocquevillians, was moved to exclaim:

> "How many times, in recent years, has de Tocqueville's famous parallel been quoted as to the two peoples destined, by a mysterious decree of Providence, each to dominate one half of the world, the one by the plow and the other by the sword!"

Aron then went on to add one more misinterpretation to Tocqueville's famous parallel. "Alexis de Tocqueville", according to Aron, "was the first, a century ago, to give a classic form to the antithesis *Washington or Moscow*."[15] There is no such antithesis in Tocqueville's work. The antithesis there, to keep Aron's term, is clearly Moscow *and* Washington. Tocqueville gave each of them half the world without the slightest hint that any other country was offered a choice. Aron is not the only one who has strangely misread Tocqueville in this passage or who has read into it a phenomenon of his own times, not Tocqueville's.[16]

WHATEVER Tocqueville's "antithesis" was, what inspired him to juxtapose Russia and America? We know where Tocqueville got some of his other ideas. For example, the statement that America would one day "become the leading naval power on the globe" can be traced to his lengthy conversations with one of his American informants, Joel Roberts Poinsett, the US Minister to Mexico from 1825 to 1829. Tocqueville kept careful notebooks of his conversations and observations. He spent five days with Poinsett, who at one point told him: "The future of the United States as to commerce is immense. We are certainly called to become the first maritime power in the world." Later, Tocqueville drew up a memorandum for himself in which he repeated Poinsett's statement in almost the same words. Finally, he put it in his

[12] I owe to Melvin J. Lasky my belated acquaintance with Gurowski's work. Gurowski wrote another book, *America and Europe* (New York, 1857), in which he argued for the orthodox American position that Europe should stay out of American affairs and the United States should stay out of European affairs. In questions of general policy, however, he maintained that European governments "must yield to the principles asserted by the American Republic. . . ."

[13] T. V. Smith, "Hindsight on de Tocqueville's Foresight", *The University Review* (Kansas City), Autumn 1942, p. 23. Ernst Jünger, *Strahlungen* (1949), pp. 15–16.

[14] Max Lerner, *America as a Civilization* (1957), p. 938.

[15] Raymond Aron, *Paix et guerre entre les nations* (1962), pp. 156, 527; *Peace and War* (1966), pp. 149, 536.

[16] Tocqueville "predicted an eventual clash between the United States and Russia because large land-mass societies with great natural resources would inevitably expand their living space" (Daniel Bell, *The Coming of Post-Industrial Society*, 1973, p. 318, n. 31). There is no such "because" in Tocqueville. He expected Russia and America to "expand their living space", but within their own halves of the world and without the implication of an eventual clash between them. Others may draw this implication; Tocqueville did not.

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book, again in almost the same words.[17]

Nowhere in Tocqueville's *Cahiers* does he record even bringing up the subject that might have led him to think those thoughts about Russia and America. Nowhere in them does he ever jot down a word about American foreign interests or foreign affairs. He records conversations with the distinguished Everett brothers (Alexander and Edward), both deeply engaged in foreign affairs, and with former President John Quincy Adams, with whom he might have discussed such a major event of the preceding period as the so-called Monroe Doctrine, promulgated during Adams's tenure as Secretary of State. Instead, his notes tell us that he talked to Alexander Everett about imprisonment for debt and to Adams about slavery and religion. Thus we have no clue from Tocqueville's notebooks why he was led to make his comments on the lack of American "external interests" and the destinies of Russia and America. The two volumes that make up the second part of Tocqueville's great work, which some consider the more important half, published in 1840, completely ignore the subject of American foreign affairs, as if he had no further interest in the subject.

But the juxtaposition of Russian and American destinies was not exactly literary *terra incognita* before Tocqueville's pronouncement. For about fifteen years previously, widely read and influential writers, now almost totally forgotten, had played variations on the theme, coming much closer to authentic prophecies of the 20th-century "Cold War." Tocqueville, who read voraciously in preparation for his youthful masterpiece, could not have been ignorant of all of them. The theme was so much in the air that even Tocqueville's particular handling of it was not wholly original with him. The other prophets may give us a clue to what had inspired Tocqueville's famous prognosis as well as being interesting and important in their own right.

ONE OF THE FIRST prophecies—if not the first—of the two destinies, American and Russian, appeared in a book by an Englishman living in America. His name was John Bristed; his book was *The Resources of the United States of America*; it was published in New York and London in the same year, 1818. A German translation appeared in 1819, a French in 1826 and again in 1832. The indications are that it was one of the most widely read and internationally circulated books on America of the period. Bristed's career encompassed half a dozen fields. He started out in England studying and practising medicine, then law. He came to New York City in 1806 at the age of twenty-eight, already the author of some books, including one novel. In New York, he practised law, gave lectures, edited a magazine and wrote more books, including the one on American resources. He returned to England in 1828, became an Episcopal clergyman, and devoted himself mainly to religious and philanthropic activities until his death in 1855.[18] The title of the book on American "resources" does not prepare the reader for what is in it. Bristed was a discursive, rambling, idiosyncratic writer who went much further afield than this title suggests.

At the very outset, Bristed informed his readers that "no circumstances can prevent these United States from becoming, eventually, and at no distant period, a great and powerful nation, influencing and controlling the other sovereignties of the world." Tocqueville's half a world was modest in comparison. Midway through his book, Bristed rhetorically announced that Britain's child and rival, America, "is rapidly emerging into unparalleled greatness; is flaming upwards, like a pyramid of fire, so that all the Western horizon is in a blaze with the brightness of its ascending glory." He claimed to see that America was playing a waiting game—"to wait and nourish the growing resources of the Union" until the existing European coalition of the Holy Alliance of Russia, Prussia and Austria had broken up. Then, he warned, America would "gradually bear down all possible opposition from any single foe."

Bristed next turned to Russia. He reflected the post-Napoleonic dread of Russia that swept through Europe as Alexander I took upon himself the defence and restoration of legitimacy and monarchy all over the world. The mood in Europe after 1815 was not unlike that after 1945. "Is *Russia* now, and for the time to come, deemed formidable to Europe?" Bristed asked. He had a solution to the Russian menace: "Behold another and a greater Russia here. With a better territory, a better government, and a better people, *America* is ripening fast into a substance, an attitude of power, which will prove far more terrible to the world than it is ever possible for the warriors of the Don or the defenders of Moscow to become." Many pages later, he was more pessimistic about stopping Russia. "It is doubtful", he reflected, "if she [Russia] be allowed a few years of peace to organise her resources, to consolidate her strength, to develop her schemes, whether or not a coalition of the other European States could stop her progress towards universal dominion in that quarter of the world." In the end, Bristed forgot that America was supposed inexorably to get the best of Russia and called on Britain "to save Europe once more."[19]

[17] Alexis de Tocqueville, *Oeuvres Complètes*, ed. J. P. Mayer (1957), Vol. V, Part I, pp. 143, 259.

[18] *Dictionary of American Biography*, Vol. III, p. 54.

[19] John Bristed, *The Resources of the United States of America* (New York, 1818), pp. 1–2, 247–248, 476, 494. The London edition is called *America and her Resources*.

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Fleetingly, perhaps for the first time, Bristed brought the already formidable Russian power and the ripening American power into confrontation. It was not the way Tocqueville would go about it. Bristed had America breaking out of its half of the world to challenge Russia in the other half; Tocqueville had been content with an essentially static model, with America in one half and Russia in the other. In this sense, Bristed was much more clearly an incipient prophet of the next century's "Cold War." I have not been able to find anything earlier or clearer, however rambling and erratic Bristed's thought may have been.

BUT BRISTED'S STORY has a surprise ending that may cast more light on Tocqueville's prognosis. Tocqueville and his friend, Gustave de Beaumont, came to the United States for nine months in 1831-1832. If Tocqueville had not read the 1826 translation, *Histoire des Etats-Unis*, before leaving for America, he could hardly have ignored the 1832 edition upon his return. In any event, something peculiar happened to a key passage in Bristed's work in its transition from English into French.

Here is the passage again in English:

> "Is *Russia* now, and for the time to come, deemed formidable to Europe? Behold another and a greater Russia *here*. With a better territory, a better government, and a better people, America is ripening fast into a substance, an attitude of power, which will prove far more terrible to the world than it is ever possible for the warriors of the Don or the defenders of Moscow to become."

Here is how this passage came out in the French translation:

> *"La Russie est devenue formidable en Europe; l'Amérique peut l'imiter dans l'autre partie du globe: elle marche rapidement vers une attitude de puissance qui deviendra bien plus redoutable au monde entier, que jamais les Cosaques du Don ou les défenseurs de Moscou n'ont pu l'être."* [20]

The French translator for a reason we can no longer guess at performed an operation on Bristed's first two sentences which brought them into consonance with Tocqueville's prognosis. That Russia and America would both become formidable in their own parts of the world was merely a weaker version of the idea that each would "hold in its hands the destinies of half the world." The rest of the passage seems to explain why America can "imitate" Russia in "the other part of the world", not why America (as Bristed intended) was waiting to become strong enough to take on all comers.[21]

In any case, Bristed can take credit for having been an early prophet of both the "Cold War" and, through his French translation, of Tocqueville's prognosis. For an almost totally forgotten book, that is no small achievement.

OUR NEXT PRECURSOR could only have come out of the late 18th and early 19th centuries. He is Dominique-Georges-Frédéric Dufour de Pradt, better known as the Abbé de Pradt. Only a Balzac could do justice to such a character.

He was ordained a priest at the age of twenty-four; appointed a clerical deputy to the Estates General in Paris in 1789 at the age of thirty; spent a decade as a counter-revolutionary émigré; enjoyed the next decade as a favourite of Napoleon; went back to the Bourbons for a short stretch; and finally, after 1815, settled down for two decades to a successful career as a self-appointed spokesman of the liberal opposition. At various times, he served as Chief Army Chaplain, Archbishop of Malines, Ambassador in Warsaw, and Grand Chancelier of the Légion d'Honneur. As a

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[20] The 1832 edition, Vol. I, pp. 341-342.

[21] The French version has been cited as an anticipation of Tocqueville by René Rémond, *Les États-Unis devant l'opinion française 1815–1852* (Paris, Librairie Armand Colin, 1962), Vol. I, p. 379, n. 19. The credit belongs to the French translator rather than to Bristed.

Rémond also cites a statement by Stendhal to the effect that *"la Russie pourrait devenir la maîtresse de l'Europe, si seulement elle le voulait, et que l'Amérique était la seule puissance à pouvoir s'y opposer"*. Stendhal's actual words were:

> *"La Russie a toujours cru, depuis Pierre le Grand, qu'elle serait, en 1819, la maîtresse de l'Europe, et l'Amérique est désormais la seule puissance qui puisse lui résister."*

This off-hand remark appeared in Stendhal's *Vie de Napoléon*, apparently written in 1817-1818 and published in full for the first time in 1929 (edited by Louis Royer in the *Oeuvres Complètes* published by the Librairie Ancienne Honoré Champion, p. 233). Did Stendhal mean that America might be able to oppose, check or challenge Russia's domination of Europe? Or did he simply mean that America could possibly resist being itself dominated by Russia?

It is difficult to be sure just how far Stendhal intended to go in this reference to America's resistance to Russia's ambition. If Stendhal meant that America was from then on the only power that might be able to oppose or check Russia's westward drive, it would make him—of all people—the first true prophet of the post-World War II Cold War, though not of Tocqueville's prognosis. (I am indebted to Professor Victor del Litto of the University of Grenoble and to Professor Victor Brombert of Princeton University for tracking down this intriguing statement by Stendhal.)

A peculiar linguistic prophecy also appeared in 1818 in *The Quarterly Review*. It turned up in a review of a book by Sir Robert Wilson, *A Sketch of the Military and Political Power in Russia, in the year 1817* (published in London and in New York in 1817). Stendhal is said to have "borrowed" several phrases or sentences from a French translation of Wilson's book, also published in 1817 (*Vie de Napoléon*, p. 429). The writer in *The Quarterly Review* predicted that English and Russian were the languages which "are one day to divide the world" (April 1818, p. 177).

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politician, he was a Talleyrand *manqué*, much better at getting important appointments than at keeping them. Stripped of all his honours and titles, first by Napoleon, then by Louis XVIII, he was forced to live by his wits as the outstanding political chronicler of his age—much the best thing that ever happened to him.[22]

No one, except de Pradt himself, can have read all that he wrote. He produced forty-six books, some in more than one volume, and innumerable articles.[23] In just one year, 1817, he put out four books. One volume was reprinted nine times in France alone. Three editions of any one of his books were not uncommon. A reprint edition of his entire works, some of them dating back thirty years, came out in 1828. He was translated into Spanish (at least nine volumes), English (at least five), German (three). Three different Spanish translations were made of one book. He was so influential that he has been called "the Walter Lippmann of his age." No politically-minded contemporary could have ignored de Pradt's literary industry.[24]

Leading political figures in the United States read and reckoned with de Pradt. John Adams's library contained one of de Pradt's most important books. Jefferson lent one of them to John Adams and John Quincy Adams. The younger Adams knew enough about "the equivocal character of the Abbé's reputation" to denounce him to Jefferson for his "treachery" to Napoleon and his "time-serving obsequiousness to the Bourbons"—both of which were true. Jefferson replied somewhat guardedly that Adams had given him a fuller understanding of de Pradt's character but still managed to express admiration for his eloquence and ingenuity. Of another book by de Pradt, Jefferson later wrote to de Pradt's American translator that he had found it ambiguous but again put in a good word for de Pradt for having given him "great outlines and profound views" of the subject. One American historian has argued, probably mistakenly, that Jefferson owed de Pradt ideas with which Jefferson had anticipated the Monroe Doctrine, and so de Pradt, through Jefferson, was putatively a progenitor of the famous doctrine.[25] Henry Clay was more generous to de Pradt, whom he quoted in a speech with the recommendation that "no man could read [de Pradt] without being enlightened and instructed."[26] We are going to find that one of the possibly basic sources of the Tocquevillian prognosis was an American review in 1830 of a major work by de Pradt.

SO MUCH FOR THE MAN. The importance of his ideas on the destinies of Russia and America can hardly be appreciated without knowing something about his life and the popularity in its time of his enormous literary output. De Pradt's ideas on the two destinies were never worked out thoroughly or consistently. He often seemed to forget in one work what he had written in another or even in the same work. Yet he had some favourite themes to which he returned, not always in the same way, again and again.

One of them, dealing with the United States, came out as early as 1817, just before Bristed's book. De Pradt stressed that the US had increased so much in territory, population and wealth that "history presents nothing equal among nascent peoples in antiquity or modern times." He was so impressed by American growth that he expounded: "The future of America is incalculable; it is clearly destined to change the face of the world." Sooner or later, he was sure, the US would dominate all of North America.[27] From this time on, de Pradt never wavered in his conviction that the United States was bound to become a great power with which Europe would have to reckon.

In 1819, de Pradt announced that Russia was "the dominant power on the continent" of Europe. He brought Russia into juxtaposition with the United States by considering them both as "vast countries, until then strangers to the rest of the world", but immediately added that the United States "already carried a preponderant weight in the affairs of the world."[28] In later works, he repeatedly envisaged Russia and the United States as bearing down on Europe from opposite sides, with Russia the immediate danger and the United

[22] De Pradt is still without a good, full study of his life and works. There is a mediocre popular biography by Emile Dousset, *L'Abbé de Pradt* (1959). The best short sketch of his life is that Josanne Pothier, "L'Abbé de Pradt, archevêque de Malines, d'apres une correspondence inédite", *Almanache de Brioude* (1962), pp. 119–143.

[23] The entire list may be found in Michaud's *Biographie Universelle*, 9th ed., Vol. 34, pp. 281–282. It fills two-and-a-half large columns of small print.

[24] These figures are based on Michaud, and on Laura Bornholdt, "The Abbé de Pradt and the Monroe Doctrine", *The Hispanic American Historical Review* (May 1944), pp. 206–207.

[25] *Writings of John Quincy Adams* (ed. W. C. Ford, 1916), Vol. VI, pp. 217–218. *The Writings of Thomas Jefferson* (Lipscomb-Bergh ed.), Vol. XV, p. 145. Jefferson to George Otis, 8 July 1820, cited by T. R. Schellenberg, "Jeffersonian Origins of the Monroe Doctrine", *The Hispanic American Historical Review* (February 1934), p. 7, see also pp. 3–6. Bornholdt's article is a critique of Schellenberg's thesis.

[26] *The Papers of Henry Clay* (ed. J. F. Hopkins, 1961), Vol. II, p. 856.

[27] M. de Pradt, *Des Colonies et de la révolution actuelle de l'Amérique* (Paris, 1817), Vol. II, pp. 350, 355, 358.

[28] *L'Europe après le Congrès d'Aix-la-Chapelle* (1819), pp. 42, 266. In this book de Pradt uncannily formulated the main points of the Monroe Doctrine four years in advance, even if they were not original with him (pp. 283–284). At least he was able to recognise the lineaments of the future when he saw them.

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States in need of more time to act as a counterbalance.

In 1822, he again paid his respects to Russia. It was the only independent state on the Continent and "thus dominates Europe." Henceforth and for a long time to come, he feared, the history of the Continent could be summed up in these words: "Tutelage of Europe by Russia." He viewed England as then playing the role that the United States would be seen playing a century later—as "protector of the liberties of Europe against the colossus of the North." His thought developed along the following lines: the struggle was between Eastern absolutism and Western constitutionalism. What Europe needed was a power in the West capable of counterbalancing Russia; but it did not exist. The US took no part in European quarrels, still preferring to increase its population, fortify itself and cover the seas with its ships of commerce.

In 1823, he returned to the charge. Russia would make itself the "regent" of Europe. Its power was "excessive [*démesuré*], colossal, pressing down on all." Russia was able to "crush" Europe, to "wipe out its very existence." In 1825, he saw South America following in the footsteps of the USA which, he thought, had already demonstrated its naval prowess in the War of 1812. As a result, he had a vision of America as "a great naval power", which would become "the liberator of the seas and the avenger of Europe." He exhorted Europeans to think of America as "an entire world, destined to attract towards it the rest of the world."[29]

DE PRADT could be wildly visionary, to the point of exasperation. He could also be subtly realistic. In 1828, for example, he refined his idea of Russian supremacy in Europe. He explained that Russia was not necessarily going to expand territorially. It was enough for Russia to possess an "immense power", which carried with it "a kind of virtual supremacy." He pointed out: "Already, before anything is resolved upon by any other government, the first question is: What will be thought of this at St Petersburg." The rest of the passage is worth quoting:

> "It is not improbable that this new authority may be exercised, for a time, with all the forms of the most polite usage, but it will not be for that reason the less real. Russia may not perhaps, like ancient Rome, order her ambassadors to insult foreign sovereigns at their own courts—command one to make war, and another to make peace—attempt to settle the domestic concerns of royal families, or declare her allies inviolable; but a look from her will carry terror, her intimations will be regarded as orders, and her displeasure felt as a disgrace and a misfortune. Such is the mildest form in which the supremacy of Russia over Europe can possibly be exercised. The pride of the Western politicians may lead them to affect to doubt the reality of this state of things; but their unwillingness to acknowledge it does not alter the case, which the lapse of a few years will make but too plain to every one."[30]

Over a century later, this state of affairs would be called "Finlandisation."

In these works from 1817 to 1828, de Pradt dealt with Russia and America unequally. Russia for him was already a fully-formed "colossus", bearing down with all its weight on Europe. America was still in a stage of formation, strong and willing enough immediately to play a preponderant role in North America or the Western hemisphere. But de Pradt held out the promise that it might not stop there. What a reader of de Pradt could not miss was the shadow cast by these two extra-European powers over their respective halves of the world. De Pradt never formulated their future destinies with the one-sentence precision of Tocqueville, but he made the potentiality of Russian and American hegemonies the insistent message of his books. De Pradt's contribution was to make Europeans more conscious than ever before that Russia and America had in some sense pre-empted the future.

ONE OF THE MORE DISTINGUISHED Americans with whom Tocqueville talked in September 1831 was Alexander Hill Everett. It was this Everett who invited Tocqueville and Beaumont to dinner to meet the former President John Quincy Adams, Edward Everett, and an English guest, Sir James Colleton.[31] The older of the two Everetts, Alexander, had had an outstanding diplomatic career and was notable for two books on foreign affairs. It seems strange that Tocqueville should have found nothing touching on this subject in his talk with Alexander Everett to record in his notebooks; but it would be even stranger if Tocqueville had not known of Everett's books and had not given them some thought. For Alexander Everett's books were the first of their kind by a native American.

Everett was born into one of the first families of Boston. His father was the minister of a leading Boston church. He graduated from Harvard in 1806, the youngest member of his class and also the one with the highest standing. John Quincy

[29] *L'Europe et L'Amérique en 1821* (1822), Vol. I, pp. 16, 20–21, 116; Vol. II, p. 331. *Parallèle de la puissance anglaise et russe* (1823), pp. 158, 161, 168. *Vrai système de l'Europe relativement à l'Amérique et à la Grèce*, (1825), pp. 82–83, 158, 184, 280.

[30] *Du système permanent de l'Europe à l'égard de la Russie et des affaires d'Orient* (1828), translated by Edward Everett in the *North American Review* (April 1830), p. 447.

[31] Tocqueville, *Oeuvres Complètes*, Vol. V, Part 1, p. 95; George Wilson Pierson, *Tocqueville and Beaumont in America* (1938), p. 417.

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Adams took him into his office for the study of law; he became and remained Adams's favourite protégé. When Adams went to Russia as American Minister in 1809, Everett went along as his private secretary. From 1815 to 1824, while Adams was Secretary of State, Everett was secretary of legation and then chargé d'affaires at The Hague. During this period he wrote his first book on foreign affairs and an essay on population. During Adams's presidency Everett served as Minister to Spain, 1825–1829, and put out his second book dealing specifically with American foreign affairs. When Tocqueville met him, Everett had retired from the diplomatic service and was editing the *North American Review*, the foremost American political and literary organ of its time. In 1845 he was named the first American envoy to China but died soon after arriving in Canton.

Everett's first book, *Europe*, published in 1822, was unlike anything an American had yet written. It was a systematic, knowledgeable survey of European politics, country by country, "with conjectures on their future prospects", based on reading and experience. It was so well done that (as the *North American Review* noted) English reviewers thought that the book, which was signed "by a Citizen of the United States", could not have been produced by an American.[32] He had read his de Pradt and his Schmidt-Phiseldeck, the latter a then-renowned, German-born, Danish official and editor whose book, *Europe and America*, was published in 1820.[33] Everett cited the latest European magazines and newspapers.

Alexander Hill Everett has deserved better from posterity. The almost 700-page *Harvard Guide to American History* has room for scores of obscure writers and books but no space for him. He is equally unknown to the almost 1,200 pages of the Library of Congress's *A Guide to the Study of the United States of America*. I have not been able to find him mentioned in any history of American diplomacy or foreign affairs, even those ostensibly devoted to ideas and issues as well as to policies and events. One hundred and ten years after his death he was rediscovered in a different connection by Professor Hans Kohn, who devoted five pages to him in his *American Nationalism* published in 1957. Professor Kohn had such a high opinion of Everett that he considered him "better equipped to see the United States as a nation among nations" than George Bancroft of vastly greater fame.[34] But it was left to a contemporary German scholar, Heinz Gollwitzer, to recognise that Everett was worth all of seventeen pages in his *Ideengeschichte* of world politics. Gollwitzer chose Everett above all others as a "statesmanlike intellectual, and a political figure with a broadly cultivated horizon" who best revealed how an American of his time understood the development of international relations.[35]

In *Europe*, the subject demanded far more consideration of Russia than of the United States. Everett fully agreed with de Pradt about Russia's domination of Europe:

> "There is evidently nothing in Europe capable of making head against such a power as this. Not all Europe, combined in opposition, will be able to resist its progress, whenever this vast machinery is seriously brought to bear upon the independence of other nations by an able and ambitious emperor."

He acknowledged "the irresistible preponderance of Russia in the European balance of power" and expected that "at no distant period it may very probably obtain an actual military dominion over the rest of Europe." Unlike de Pradt, however, Everett was less pessimistic about the outcome of Russian dominion. He professed to believe that the Russian ruling class was as civilised as that of Europe, so that liberal political institutions, but not civilisation itself, would suffer at the hands of the Russians. "It is merely a change of power from the hands of one cultivated and civilised government to those of another, and will produce no unfavourable effect on the general state of society", he wrote reassuringly. He even welcomed Russian domination because it would allegedly put an end to the division of Europe and bring about European consolidation under Russian rule.[36]

EVERETT dealt with the United States in this book only as a commercial power. He boasted that

[32] *North American Review* (July 1822), p. 204. Everett did not use his name because he was still in active diplomatic service.

[33] Conrad G. F. E. von Schmidt-Phiseldeck's book had as its subtitle, "or the relative state of the civilised world at a future period." It belonged to the prophetic literature of the time, but concentrated almost wholly on America with no similar consideration of Russia and, therefore, has not been included here. Schmidt-Phiseldeck contributed to the idea that the centre of gravity of world power was moving to America with such statements as that, after 1814,

> "the impulse towards a new change of events, ceased to proceed from the old continent, and it is possible, that in a short time it will emanate wholly from the new one" (pp. 3–4).

His book first appeared in German and was translated the same year into English, of which a facsimile edition was put out by the Royal Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1976. It was also translated into Danish, Dutch, and Swedish.

[34] Hans Kohn, *American Nationalism* (1957), pp. 32–37.

[35] Heinz Gollwitzer, *Geschichte des weltpolitischen Denkens* (Göttingen, 1972), Vol. I, pp. 408–425.

[36] A Citizen of the United States [Alexander Hill Everett], *Europe: or a General Survey of the Present Situation of the Principal Powers: with conjectures on their Future Prospects* (1822), pp. 348, 351, 420, 447–449. This volume was translated into French, German, and Spanish.

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America's "commercial greatness" had risen to such heights that "all preceding maritime states dwindle into nothing in comparison." The United States were commercially already "the rivals and may perhaps be the successors of England." A European reader might have wondered when politics would follow economics.

The *North American Review* criticised Everett for exaggerating the force of Russia and contended that he was wrong to consider it "to be superior to that of all the other European states combined." It also thought that he had overrated the advantages of consolidating Europe under Russian rule. But it acknowledged that Russia

> "is powerful indeed; at this time the most powerful state on the continent, and it is by no means the true policy of the others to encourage her growth; but she is not yet a counterpoise for them all.[37]

Americans did not need Tocqueville, thirteen years later, to tell them how close Russia was coming to holding the destinies of the European world in its hands.

In his companion volume of 1827, *America*, Everett dealt at greater length with his native country but did not neglect Russia. By this time he had added the United States to Russia and Great Britain as "the three prominent and first rate powers of the civilised and Christian world." Geography, good government, industry, wealth and knowledge had given the United States "at this early period of their national existence, the lofty position of a leading power among the nations." He was now sure that America was bound to outstrip England. By the time he had finished the book he had made the United States "at no very distant period, a more populous, wealthy, and powerful community than any the world has ever seen" and more important politically than all of Europe combined—by the close of the 19th century.[38]

AS FOR RUSSIA, Everett now changed his mind about the benevolence and advantages of its rule over Europe. Much closer to de Pradt's vision, he saw Russia as an immense military empire "advancing with giant steps to the conquest of the west." A Russian victory would mean "a return to barbarism." But he came through with a surprise ending. If Russia were to be prevented from imposing its barbaric rule on the West, it would come about "because the principle of civilisation and improvement will be powerfully sustained by aid from abroad, that is, from America." Everett, in effect, put his hope in a future European-American alliance against Russia.

This was not Tocqueville's perspective. Everett did not limit America's power to half the world. He projected it to Europe and beyond, at least by the end of the 19th century. Nevertheless, the emphasis on Russia and America as the two coming great powers, with an embattled Europe increasingly dependent on American aid against Russia, contributed to a climate of opinion which was differently reflected in Tocqueville's prognosis. Everett, like de Pradt, came much closer than Tocqueville to the prophecy of a future "Cold War."

ANOTHER EVERETT—the more famous Edward—made one more attack on the subject after Alexander had assumed the editorship of the *North American Review*. In 1830, Edward Everett—pastor, Harvard President and professor, Governor of Massachusetts, Minister to Great Britain, Secretary of State, US Senator—reviewed two of de Pradt's books which had appeared during the previous two years. In his review, he agreed with de Pradt that Russia was likely to turn its power against Europe. He was, however, less harsh in his view of Russian expansionist policy, on the ground that its most important territorial acquisitions had been gained as a result of a war forced upon it by Napoleonic France. But he went along with de Pradt's view that Russia threatened "the independence of the western nations of Europe." He also shared much of de Pradt's pessimism about the outcome and reluctantly agreed that efforts to contain Russia would mostly be "hopeless."[39]

Edward Everett's review of de Pradt appeared in the issue of April 1830. Tocqueville arrived in the United States in May 1831. Soon after their arrival in New York, Tocqueville and Beaumont began to haunt two libraries where they had at their disposal books and periodicals. When Tocqueville saw Alexander Everett at the end of September 1831, he identified him as "former minister of the United States in Spain and distinguished writer."[40] He soon met Edward Everett. It is likely that Tocqueville would by the time he met the Everetts not have become acquainted with their recent work, in which he would have read the views of both de Pradt and the two brothers on the destiny of Russia? Even if Tocqueville had by some chance failed to inform himself of the Everetts' works in the New York libraries and in subsequent reading, was it likely that the Everetts themselves would have made no mention of them during their talks with Tocqueville? Owing to the silence of Toc-

[37] *North American Review* (July 1822), p. 187.

[38] By a Citizen of the United States [Alexander Hill Everett], *America: or a General Survey of the Political Situation of the Several Powers of the Western Continent, with conjectures on their Future Prospects* (1827), pp. 18–19, 256, 347, 349.

[39] *North American Review* (April 1830), pp. 399–454. Edward Everett is identified as the author of this review by William Cushing, *Index to the North American Review* (1878), pp. 38, 87.

[40] Letter of Beaumont to his brother Jules, 26 May 1831, in Pierson, *Tocqueville and Beaumont in America*, p. 85. *Oeuvres Complètes*, Vol. V, Part 1, p. 95.

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queville's notebooks and letters on this score no final answer to these questions is possible. Still it is safe to say that the likelihood of Tocqueville's ignorance of the Everetts' works cannot be very great.

THERE IS ONE MORE neglected and important precursor of Tocqueville's prognosis, indeed the closest of them all.

Michel Chevalier belonged to the converts to Saint-Simonianism after the master's death in 1825. Comte Claude Henri de Saint-Simon, the founder of the school, had already indicated to his disciples what to think of the future of the United States. At the age of 19, Saint-Simon had joined the French forces fighting in the American War of Independence; he later claimed that he had made an important contribution to the British defeat at Yorktown; it gave him reason, he thought, to regard himself as "one of the founders of the liberty of the United States." In *Letters to an American*, written in 1817, Saint-Simon boasted that he had recognised ever since the American Revolution that it had

> "signalled the beginning of a new political era, that the revolution would necessarily bring about an important progress in civilisation in general, and that in a short time it would cause great changes in the social order then existing in Europe."

In an unpublished work, Saint-Simon credited Americans with a "political capacity" superior to that of the English and advised that the United States should be regarded "like a child which had grown up and which from now on ought to be listened to in the council which deliberates on the general interests of the great family."[41]

Chevalier was a young engineer won over to Saint-Simonianism in 1830 at the age of 24. He gave up his original career to become a leading journalist and activist of the movement, soon to become a cult. After spending six months in jail as an alleged threat to the régime of Louis Philippe, he received a commission from the Minister of the Interior, Adolphe Thiers, later Premier and President, to investigate the new means of communication and transportation in the United States. His mission was not unlike that of Tocqueville and Beaumont to look into the American prison system. With this trip to the USA, Chevalier broke his ties with the Saint-Simonians and struck out on his own as a leading economic thinker and doer. The Collège de France appointed him professor of political economy in 1840; he sat for a short time in the Chamber of Deputies, later for a longer period in the Senate; he was the main French instigator and signatory of the first European commercial agreement between France and Great Britain in 1860. Heinrich Heine called him "one of the most noble characters."[42] Chevalier is another prophet who has been obscured in Tocqueville's shadow.

CHEVALIER came to the US in 1834, two years after Tocqueville had left. As against Tocqueville's nine months, however, Chevalier stayed for almost two years. By chance, parts of Chevalier's book were published before the appearance of Tocqueville's first half in January 1835. About one-third of Chevalier's book, which came out in 1836, began to appear in 1834 in the semi-official *Journal des Débats* in the form of letters from North America. Tocqueville studiously avoided reading Chevalier's reports in order to be uninfluenced by them; Chevalier for his part does not seem to have known of Tocqueville's work until he came to the end of his own stay in America at the end of 1835.[43] Thus both wrote independently at almost the same time and in much the same circumstances. Both were the same age, thirty, when their books came out.

That Chevalier's work is worthy of standing beside Tocqueville's masterpiece has occasionally been recognised, though few American scholars have taken the hint.[44]

Chevalier's work complemented Tocqueville's and sometimes anticipated it. One of the oft-remarked weaknesses of Tocqueville's treatment was his ignorance of or lack of interest in the economic substructure of American society and institutions. Chevalier, an engineer by profession and then still a social radical in transition from the school of Saint-Simon, took an interest in material aspects of American life which Tocqueville largely ignored. Moreover, some of his views of America's future were no less prescient than Tocqueville's.

Like Tocqueville, Chevalier foresaw that the United States was bound "without delaying long" to extend from sea to sea (though he did not venture to say anything about north-to-south). The United States was reserved for "high destinies" of

[41] *Oeuvres de Claude-Henri de Saint-Simon* (Edition Anthropos, 1966, reprint of edition of 1868–1876), Vol. II, pp. 140, 149. Frank Manuel, *The New World of Henri Saint-Simon* (1956), pp. 280–281.

[42] Georges Weill, *L'École Saint-Simonienne* (1896), p. 23.

[43] Pierson, *Tocqueville and Beaumont*, p. 726. Michel Chevalier, *Lettres sur l'Amérique du Nord* (1836), Vol. II, p. 420, n. 1, alludes to Tocqueville's book, which he had evidently read at the end of 1835. This book was incompletely translated in a Boston edition of 1839 as *Society, Manners and Politics in the United States* (repr. 1966 and 1969).

[44] "As a result, he [Chevalier] was to make an economic study and a factual survey of America as valuable and as prophetic in its way as Tocqueville's more institutional and more philosophical descriptions" (Pierson, p. 175). "... the *Lettres sur l'Amérique du Nord* seems to us worthy of being placed immediately beside *Démocratie en Amérique*" (Rémond, Vol. I, p. 376).

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the utmost importance to the "general progress of the human race." Chevalier, in the manner of his time, divided Europe into two main branches—the Latin and the Teutonic, with England and America belonging to the latter. The Teutonic, he warned, was forging ahead of the Latin; but the latter was also beset by a third group, the Slavs, led by Russia, which threatened to put the Latin nations in third place.

Chevalier was filled with anxiety about the future of a Europe pulled between East and West. In an early letter to the *Journal des Débats* (dated in his book 24 April 1834), Chevalier raised the question of what Europe would be in a hundred years, that is, by 1934, five years before the Second World War. He speculated that Europe would be "divided, enfeebled by internecine struggles", forced to "bow our heads that we still carry so high and so proudly." And then what? What countries would take Europe's place? Here, suddenly, Chevalier strikingly anticipated Tocqueville.

Chevalier's answer to his own question was—Russia and America, "the two great figures which are rising today at both ends of the horizon." They were "two young colossi who watch each other from one shore of the Atlantic to the other and touch each other on the banks of the Pacific Ocean." Would they not, he wondered, "soon divide among themselves the dominion of the world?" [45]

Of the two colossi, Chevalier seemed to think that America was more likely to play the dominant role:

> "The Americans are the most enterprising of men and the most ambitious of nations: if we continue for too long to be completely absorbed by our sterile disputes, they would be the people to come upon us unexpectedly to take away from us the precious burden of the destinies of the human race and put themselves in first place."

Chevalier was also greatly concerned about what he called "the struggle between the East and the West", which he called "the most general fact in the history of the civilisation to which we belong." In this struggle, too, he thought that the Americans might best be able to reconcile the two.

In his last letter (dated 22 October 1835) Chevalier passed judgment on the general foreign policy of the United States. It differed markedly from Tocqueville's view, which had practically obliterated foreign policy from the American scene for the foreseeable future. "The foreign policy of American democracy", wrote Chevalier, "is profoundly egoistic; national ambition is characteristic of growing nations." He specified: "The ambitions of the United States are without limits; they aspire to the suzerainty over South America; they covet one by one the provinces of Mexico." The Americans, he thought, greatly resembled the Romans, though he would not go so far as to suggest that the Americans were also "destined to become the masters of the world." While the Americans had "faults" which shocked foreign nations, he reflected, they also had formidable "qualities" which Europeans were advised to emulate in order to "maintain our rank in the world in spite of them and everyone else." [46]

THERE WERE OBVIOUS similarities and differences between the views of Tocqueville and Chevalier on the destiny of America. Both anticipated the "manifest destiny" of the next decade. Both, in fact, used the very term, Tocqueville in the plural, Chevalier in the singular. Tocqueville saw it extending from the polar regions to the tropics and from the Atlantic to the Pacific, Chevalier from sea to sea and more particularly through the domination of South America and absorption of Mexico. Both resorted to an analogy with the Romans—Tocqueville when he thought of the Americans making themselves "master of the seas", Chevalier more generally, stopping just short of making Americans "the masters of the world." The Roman analogy was to become especially popular after the Second World War.[47]

BUT MOST REMARKABLE was the thought common to Tocqueville and Chevalier and put into print within a few months of each other: that Russia and America were going to divide the world between them. Yet, for all the similarity, there was a difference. Tocqueville did not clearly put the rise of Russia and America in the context of the decline of Europe. He merely observed that all other nations had apparently reached their "natural limits"; only these two were still growing. Chevalier explicitly linked the rise of Russia and America to the decline of Europe. If Europe wished to avoid such a fate, it

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[45] This letter appeared in the *Journal des Débats* of 11 June 1834. But this sentence did not. The key sentence, "*Qui peut dire . . . la domination de l'Univers*", was cut out of the newspaper version and appeared only in Chevalier's book in 1836 (p. 141). Thus Chevalier may have written his version of the idea before Tocqueville published his; but Tocqueville was first in point of publication.

In the next decade, however, the *Journal des Débats* came much closer to the future "Cold War" and its repercussions on Europe. In an editorial leader, expressing alarm at the US annexation of Texas at the expense of Mexico, the following comment appeared in the issue of 24 September 1845:

> "Between the Russian autocracy in the East and the democracy of the United States thus enlarged in the West, Europe could one day find itself compressed more than would comport with its independence and its dignity."

[46] *Lettres sur l'Amérique du Nord,* Vol. I, pp. v, xi, 154–155, 177; Vol. II, pp. 415–417.

[47] "The West has known nothing like it [expansion of American power after the Second World War] since the Roman Empire" (Raymond Aron, *Peace and War*, p. 1).

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had to learn from America. He held out some hope, but not much.

The two precocious and formidable Frenchmen made up their minds about America's destiny in the midst of the Jacksonian era, which American historians have traditionally regarded as excessively concerned with internal problems and politics. Tocqueville was more distinctly influenced by the seeming American withdrawal from foreign affairs. Chevalier speculated more freely and adventurously, not only about the meeting of East and West but also the role of the United States in bringing together the North and South. The Jacksonian introversion did not stop thoughtful Europeans from looking ahead to where all this build-up of raw power was likely to go.

THERE WERE PROPHETS aplenty of America's destiny as a great power in the first three decades of the 19th century. I have chosen to discuss those who, like Tocqueville, juxtaposed Russia and America. Of these, it may be said that they fall into two groups, both ancestors of similar schools of thought since the Second World War.

One—to which Bristed, de Pradt, and Alexander Everett belong—more nearly prophesied a Russian-American "Cold War." Their thinking was imbued with fear of Russia—de Pradt most of all and Everett almost as much in his second book. They had largely lost faith in Europe's capacity to withstand Russian pressure and anxiously looked about for a "counterweight." In the distance they saw the United States, growing furiously in population, wealth, and territory. They did not want Russia and America to divide the world between them; they wanted America to help Europe drive Russia back to its own world—outside Central and Western Europe. They looked on America's future domination of its half of the world with complacency, but they did not want or did not expect America to remain satisfied with it. In varying degrees they were anti-Russian and pro-American.

The second school of thought—to which Tocqueville belonged and to a lesser degree Chevalier—might be described in present-day terms as "bi-polar." Instead of conflict, they foresaw a division of the world. Not that Tocqueville's political sympathies were equally divided between Russia and America. He saw America as combating the wilderness and barbarism, Russia as combating the civilisation of the West. America stood for freedom, Russia for servitude. Nevertheless, Tocqueville allotted to each of them "the destinies of half the world." There he stopped. He did not attempt to say what would happen next or whether they would be content with their portions of the world. Chevalier is harder to pin down. If one goes no further than the letter dated 24 April 1834, the similarity with Tocqueville is remarkable, even if Chevalier put the idea of a division of the world as a question rather than as an affirmation. But Chevalier also suggested elsewhere that Americans might put themselves in "first place" in the place of Europeans. To some extent he may be said to have had a foot in both camps.

One way or the other, the two decades after 1815 produced some extraordinary anticipations and approximations of theories and realities that came out in full force after 1945. The odd thing is that the prophet who least well anticipated the post-World War II "Cold War", Alexis de Tocqueville, has received almost all the honour and attention. Tocqueville's work is great enough to stand without this gratuitous glorification. The other prophets have waited long enough for some share of the glory.

Silver English

Writing now in my silver English
I see a Roman senator
Waiting stolidly in his chair
The incoming of the Vandals,
Sitting there making a statement
About what he could not prevent.

Excavating after some thousands
Of years the bits of that echo
And putting them together,
Scholars of alien cultures,
Translating them, are at issue:
Does it mean "rejoice" or "lament"?

Patric Dickinson

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Arthur Koestler's Theodicy

On Sin, Science, & Politics—By STEPHEN TOULMIN

TWENTY years ago, the well-known political novelist and journalist, Arthur Koestler—who had been a Berliner in the early 1930s, but was now domiciled in London—caught his admirers off guard by publishing a new book called *The Sleepwalkers*. The most unexpected thing about this book was its *subject*. It was a fat, detailed, and heavily documented treatise on the history and psychology of scientific discovery during the Renaissance. Yet the book was written with all of Koestler's familiar flair and punch. Heaven knows, it was *readable*! Also, the author made no attempt to disguise his feelings about the protagonists in his story. From his viewpoint, Copernicus and Galileo turned out to be ambiguous or unsympathetic figures. As for Johann Kepler: at times Koestler's sympathy for him amounted (it seemed) to outright identification, so that some professional historians of science were heard to mutter sniffily that the hero of this latest autobiographical novel was Johann Koestler.

They had something to mutter about; for Arthur Koestler had in fact done an admirable job. He had read Ptolemy and Copernicus with some care, and Kepler with real love. True: he had an axe to grind, a thesis to argue, but it was a legitimate—even if, at points, an extreme—thesis; and he put a great deal of serious labour into presenting his reading of the Renaissance primary sources in a way that supported his particular interpretations. From the scholarly point of view, therefore, the book was not one that could be simply ignored; and, in due course, the central sections of the book were reprinted in textbook form, as *The Watershed*, and widely used in general education courses at American liberal arts colleges.

Yet the question remained: What had happened to Koestler? How had the highly articulate, anti-Stalinist author of those striking political novels, *Darkness at Noon* (1940) and *Thieves in the Night* (1946)—the autobiographer of *Scum of the Earth* and co-author of a classic collection of essays in anti-Communist conversion literature, *The God that Failed* (1949)—become so distracted from politics that he was writing, not just about science, but about *the science of 350 years ago*? Here was a puzzle: one glance back at Koestler's earlier history apparently did something to resolve it. After all, his readers reminded themselves, he had been a "science writer" for the Ullstein press in Berlin back in the days before Hitler. But why Ptolemy and Galileo? Why not, say, Einstein and Heisenberg? What was it that had had the effect of snatching Koestler, not merely out of his earlier political vein, but out of his century?

The years passed, and that question has remained unanswered. In some ways, indeed, the mystery has only deepened. For, though Koestler continued to write from time to time about matters of current politics and controversy—capital punishment or vivisection, Britain's post-War afflictions or the history of the Jews—his main effort went into a series of books directed at seemingly unpredictable targets in and around the general area of "science." First, there came *The Act of Creation* (1964), which put forward a syncretistic but suggestive account of wit, artistic creativity, and scientific discovery, as three faces of a single underlying human "faculty" that he called *bisociation*—the capacity (one might say) to put Two and One together, and get *vingt et un*. Next, there came *The Ghost in the Machine* (1967). This was a complex and technical discussion of Mind and Body, full of polemical attacks on shallow behaviouristic accounts of human mentality, on fashionable philosophical analyses of "mental events" and the like, combined with the beginnings of a constructive theory about the evolutionary history and functional eccentricities of the human brain.

Then, there was a Shandy-like digression. Koestler's discomfort over Darwinian evolution

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theory led him into a flirtation with the 20th-century supporters of Lamarckism, and a third "K" was at hand to displace Kepler in his affections: Paul Kammerer, who had in 1919 published a book attacking the belief in "historical coincidence" called *Das Gesetz der Serie*, and finally committed suicide after being accused of faking some experiments on the pigmentation of toads. (Faced with Koestler's resulting book, *The Case of the Midwife Toad*, even his more sympathetic readers found Kammerer a less convincing love object than Kepler had been.) Meanwhile, Koestler was editing and publishing a collection of scientific and philosophical essays, called *Beyond Reductionism:* these had originally been prepared for a symposium at Alpbach, in the Austrian Tyrol, where Koestler had his summer home. And now, finally, we have Koestler's own summary and digest of what he has been up to this last quarter-of-a-century—a 325-page condensation of his philosophical ideas and scientific speculations, with the title *Janus: a Summing Up.*[1]

JANUS repays reading, and reading with care, even by those who cannot read it with love. There has always been something odd, and hard to grasp, about these scientific books of Koestler's. All of them have had a certain elusive, confusing quality about them, carrying multiple messages on several different levels, and leaving the reader in the same squinting confusion as a double-exposed photographic print. It has been as though, in each case, he had written two or three separate and distinct books, and then muddled the chapters together between a single pair of boards.

In *The Sleepwalkers*, for example, Koestler gave us a careful and critical analysis of the investigations and considerations that led Johann Kepler and the other astronomers of the Renaissance to put forward, and defend, their new views about the planetary system and its relations to the larger cosmos. But he accompanied this analysis with a strong attack on a certain kind of scientific rationalism, which had (in his view) led people over the last few decades to exaggerate the logicality of scientific method and scientific investigation. Far from science making progress by conforming to set, formal procedures (he argued), scientists have commonly stumbled their ways to new discoveries, guided—like sleepwalkers—by some "eye" inaccessible to conscious criticism or logical calculation.

Yet it was never clear who Koestler was getting at with these objections. His attacks might have carried weight against a few philosophers of science of the Viennese "logical empiricist" school; but it seemed scarcely fair for him to treat these minor opponents as spokesmen for an entire established scientific orthodoxy. After all, most real working scientists have little patience with abstract pedestrian doctrines about "scientific method." (Nobody has spoken more passionately about the imaginative character of scientific work than Albert Einstein.) So Koestler's readers were left in uncertainty about the rights and wrongs of his arguments. On the one hand, he had evidently collected a fascinating mass of historical and biographical material about Copernicus, Kepler and their associates. On the other hand, his polemic against the over-intellectualising of science apparently misfired. So, how was one to read the book?

His subsequent books have been flawed by very similar ambiguities. Whether writing about humour or art, the shortcomings of behaviouristic psychology or the workings of the human brain, Koestler can always be relied on to produce a rich and complex body of well-digested factual material. (His early experience as a science writer has not gone for nothing.) Yet, behind and between the expository chapters, the reader is always aware of an undertow: a rhetorical animus directed against some supposed purblind cabal of hardline embattled scientists, determined to maintain the grip of an outdated mechanistic orthodoxy. The Public Mind has to be rescued from this Dragon; and St Arthur will always be there, just in time, to cut loose the bonds and carry the heroine off to safety. Still, here again, it is never entirely clear who exactly composes this cabal, or how they supposedly succeed in imposing their authority on those fresh generations of young, hard-nosed, and highly counter-suggestible apprentices who enter the natural sciences every year.

IN THIS RESPECT, *Janus* is a real help. Now, at last, we can separate out the superimposed photographic images, and get them into focus one at a time. For now, at last, Koestler gives us a systematic account of the various different theses or "causes" (some will say, "prejudices") that have provided the head of steam behind each of his previous books from *The Sleepwalkers* on. Furthermore, he does so in a way that lets us see how these various theses fit together within a larger intellectual framework. And it turns out on closer scrutiny that our earlier confusions were well justified. The fine-textured fabric of scientific argument that he sets out for us in each of the books represents only one of the superimposed layers that make up his overall picture of Nature and Humanity, and a comparatively superficial one at that. For behind and below the arguments about behaviourism and evolution and statistics there lies a deeper, and an essentially philosophical, view of the world. If we are to get to the bottom of the Koestler Problem,

[1] *Janus: A Summing Up.* By ARTHUR KOESTLER. Hutchinson, £6.95: Random House, $10.00.

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therefore, we must penetrate through the surface tapestry of "science" and identify the larger scheme of concepts and principles underlying it.

My aim is to take the arguments of *Janus* and its predecessors, and try to show what common underlying considerations have apparently led Koestler to adopt the attitudes he does toward each of these different sciences he criticises. Once this is done, I believe, it will turn out that Koestler's break with his earlier political ways of thought has in fact been neither quite as sharp, nor quite as complete, as at first appeared.

ALL THE SAME, we have to begin with the science. We can find our way through to Koestler's deeper philosophical positions only where his fabric shows signs of strain. The task is not easy, since Koestler comes near to swamping us with fascinating and diverting scientific discussions, so we must keep our heads. Even the most concise summary and discussion of the issues he raises is liable to appear laborious, and I can only do my best to keep my account fair and lucid.

Koestler's scientific arguments revolve around six chief theses: three negative, three positive. I list his negative theses first, not to suggest that his intellectual aims are merely destructive—Koestler is a master of polemical sarcasm, but his purposes in *Janus* go far beyond discrediting his opponents—rather, because it is easier to see what the meaning of his positive doctrines is, by contrasting them with the positions that he is determined to undercut and sweep away. As so often in philosophy, the destructive work is intended only as preparatory ground-clearing: *démolir pour mieux bâtir*, to adapt one of Koestler's favourite French phrases. And the deeper thrust of his arguments becomes clearer, if we look and see what kinds of constructive possibilities he opens up for himself, by dismantling the particular rival positions that he singles out for his fiercest attacks.

The three positions on which Koestler concentrates his destructive fire are all of them, in one way or another, included among the "crumbling citadels of orthodoxy" which he denounces as superstitions from the "*Zeitgeist* of reductionist philosophy which prevailed during the first half of our century." (As he sees the matter, the scientific establishment has closed its ranks around these positions, and continues to defend them *à l'outrance*, ignoring the powerful arguments that should long ago have discredited them.) They are, respectively: (*1*) behaviourist psychology, (*2*) neo-Darwinist evolution theory, and (*3*) the belief in historical coincidences.

(*1*) TO BEGIN WITH the most obvious—one might almost say, the sitting—target: Koestler has a field-day demolishing the more extreme claims of the psychological behaviourists. These claims are, for him, the most obvious (and obviously ridiculous) illustration of "reductionism" in the discussion of human affairs, especially the mental life of human beings. Both J. B. Watson and B. F. Skinner come in for some well-merited knockabout humour: especially for their attempts to find a place in their theories for the creativity of the writer, the artist, or the scientist. What Koestler objects to most in Watson, for instance, is his claim that artistic creativity consists in the capacity to pick out a successful solution to a technical problem *after* a period of "random manipulation"—that, in Koestler's words, "the solution is 'hit upon' *by chance* after many random attempts"; and his further suggestion that the artist's choice of a solution is "reinforced" by "admiration and commendation, both his own and others." On the contrary, Koestler argues: we must suppose that, even though often unconscious, all the "combinatorial activities underlying creativity" have been somehow *directed toward* the eventually successful outcome from the start.

LET ME MAKE two brief comments at this point. First: on the technical level, Koestler does an injustice to Watson by his manner of paraphrasing him. Watson does not in fact claim that the solutions to problems in art or science are "hit upon by chance." It is, he claims, precisely the discriminating selectivity a creative person relies on in recognising that a solution answers to the needs of his problem which displays his "creativeness"; and this "selectivity in recognition" is by no means a random, or chance, matter. Right or wrong, what Skinner and Watson are arguing is that the successful outcome of creative work depends *entirely* on this discriminating selectivity. Given that, it is of minor importance whether the "ideas", or *possible* solutions, between which the artist has to choose originated in the first place from "random" combinatorial activities or from "directed" ones. Fertility of imagination is all. So the most effective way of promoting creativity is to find ways of *speeding up* the generation of new possibilities, so as to increase the repertory from which the artist has to choose, rather than to try and find ways of "preadapting", or "pre-editing", those possibilities in advance to the demands of any given external problem. This conclusion may not be true in point of fact; but it is not as ridiculous as Koestler's caricature implies.

Secondly: on a rhetorical level, Koestler makes things too easy for himself, by focusing his attention on such popular books as Skinner's *Beyond Freedom and Dignity*. Although most "radical behaviourists" do have something of the *simplificateur* about them, just because they are

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engaged in a legitimate task of scientific analysis, I know few who would defend the wild generalisations and extrapolations characteristic of Skinner's popular writings. As a result, Koestler merely ignores the intellectually more powerful work that has been done by such serious-minded behaviourists as Joseph Brady and Israel Goldiamond, for whom the public dust-up over Skinner's *B F & D* is little more than an irrelevant joke. (At times, indeed, this tendency of Koestler's to confuse popularisations for serious science overreaches itself. For instance, he refers to a jokingly exaggerated passage in Desmond Morris's *The Naked Ape* as "obviously meant to be taken in all seriousness", and cites it humourlessly as illustrating one of "two impressive strongholds of reductionist orthodoxy"!)

I hasten to add one disclaimer. I, too, deplore the present state of much academic psychology in the West, and I would applaud anybody who was able to show convincingly what has side-tracked so many psychologists into their present collections of trivial dead-ends; so I am in no mood to put forward Skinner and Watson as masters of wisdom. It is just that Koestler's demolition job misses the central targets. Instead of looking seriously at the things that went wrong *inside* Western psychology around the turn of the century—E. B. Titchener's over-selective reading of Wilhelm Wundt, and the like—he picks on the one single feature of behaviourism that gives him offence, viz., its insistence on the efficacy of *success* as contrasted with *foresight*, and relies on this alone to discredit the whole enterprise. In the end, as we shall see, this fact tells us more about Koestler than it does about Skinner and Watson.

(2) KOESTLER'S SECOND CHIEF TARGET of criticism is "the neo-Darwinian (or 'synthetic') theory which holds that evolution is the outcome of 'nothing but' chance mutations retained by natural selection. . . ."

About the problems of evolution theory Koestler has a great deal to say, and much of it is very interesting. True: many of the problems that he underlines, as damaging to the claims of contemporary neo-Darwinism, are problems that evolutionary biologists of Darwinist sympathies acknowledge and are actively working on, with reasonable hope of success. Still, like the admirable science writer he is, Koestler does a lot to make these problems intelligible to the ordinary reader.

For instance, he has some excellent things to say about the role of animal behaviour in shaping the course of evolutionary change. Animal species are not merely the passive victims or beneficiaries of their habitats: they themselves do much to shape those habitats, and to determine the "selection pressures" that are operative on them in any given situation. (Anatomical fleetness of foot will save the antelope from the lion only if it is also psychologically quick to take fright, and flight.) Whether instinctive or exploratory, or both, such modes of behaviour have a central part to play in any adequate account of animal speciation; and Koestler is right to emphasise their importance. None of this, however, is in itself damaging to neo-Darwinism, any more than it was to Darwin's own ways of arguing: much of the original debate about "natural selection" in the 19th century, in fact, dealt with just such issues. It is only when these behavioural elements are quoted as proving the necessity for Lamarckian—as well as Mendelian—mechanisms of inheritance that Koestler puts himself squarely on the opposite side of the fence to the neo-Darwinists.

WHY SHOULD HE want to do this? On the basis of the biological evidence alone, this is never quite clear. Indeed, Koestler confesses that at one point he nearly sold the pass to the neo-Darwinians through inadvertence. Alister Hardy's ideas about the role of "progress by behavioural initiative" in determining the course of evolution were so appealing to him that he gave them more credence than he should have done:

> When I wrote *The Ghost in the Machine* I found this theory rather attractive, but on second thoughts it reveals a crucial flaw, in still relying—though to a lesser extent than the orthodox theory—on random mutations to achieve the fantastically complex changes in the nervous system that are needed in order to insert a new habit or skill into the organism's native equipment.

But he recovered his equilibrium, and here takes care to cover himself:

> From a methodological point of view it seems preferable to assume that the insect-hunting skill of Darwin's finch became impressed on its chromosomes by some unknown process *because it was useful*—that is, by Lamarckian inheritance—instead of invoking once more the Darwinian mantra.

Notice two things here, for future reference: the slightly odd use of the term "methodological" in the second quotation—as though the preference for Lamarckian processes, even unknown ones, were simply *procedural*—and the deliberate use, in the first, of the phrase "random mutations" instead of "mutations" by itself. Once again, it is the supposed *randomness* of mutations on the neo-Darwinian theory to which Koestler objects: he finds evolutionary change unintelligible (even irrational) unless genetic mutations are by some means (even by some means as yet unknown) *pre-*

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adapted to the future needs and conditions of life of the organisms that will carry them.

(*3*) THIS SAME THEME, viz. Koestler's rejections of "chance" and "randomness" in the affairs of the natural world, is even more clearly apparent in his discussion of probability theory, which is the third of his targets. How can the physical order in the natural world be intelligible, if it is the product of quantum mechanical processes that have only a *statistically probable* outcome?

At some points in Koestler's arguments, he seems to be attacking the whole enterprise of statistics itself:

> How do the dogs of New York know when to stop biting and when to make up the daily quota? How are the murderers in England and Wales made to stop at four victims per million? By what mysterious power is the roulette ball induced after a glut of "reds", to restore the balance in the long run?

Koestler knows perfectly well, of course, that probability calculations are concerned with the question: What is most likely to happen where large numbers of independent events occur *in the absence of* clairvoyant dogs and "mysterious powers"? These questions are in fact rhetorical.

At other times, quantum mechanics seems to be Koestler's target: in particular, the "lack of determination" characteristic of individual events on the quantum scale. From Koestler's point of view, at any rate, one cannot rest content with a physical world picture built around so indeterministic a theory alone. At the very least, we must develop also a parallel, complementary account of the manner in which Nature counteracts randomness and creates "order" out of "disorder"—an account, that is, of

> the morphic, or formative, or syntropic tendency, Nature's striving to create order out of disorder, cosmos out of chaos, as ultimate and irreducible principles beyond mechanical causation.

THE THREE POSITIVE THESES Koestler puts forward as his constructive contribution to science—or is it philosophy?—offer us a very different way of viewing the world of human behaviour, organic nature and historical change. His is a world ruled by order and forethought, hierarchy and degree: a world flawed only by the redeemable or remediable shortcomings of human nature. He constructs it around (*1*) the notion of "bisociation" referred to earlier; (*2*) a representation of the natural order as a complex, pyramidal "holarchy", composed of Janus-faced units that he calls "holons"; and (*3*) the hypothesis of a "paranoid streak" in human beings, which acts as the Worm in the Apple of human affairs but proves, on closer examination, to be the outcome of an "evolutionary mistake" in the development of the human brain, and corrigible by pharmaceutical means.

(*1*) BISOCIATION can be explained quickly. It is the faculty in human thinking that directs the creative mind, whether in the realm of science, or art, or of wit. As such, it is Koestler's answer to the behaviourists, serving to eliminate the objectionable element of "randomness" in the behaviourist account of human conduct and creativity. This is in fact a suggestive and potentially worthwhile concept, for which Koestler has already received some credit in the professional literature. True, it is not without problems and ambiguities of its own. If we take Koestler as meaning, simply, that creative thinkers do not generate their ideas with complete randomness, but confine their search for solutions to the sub-class of established "possibilities" appropriate to the *general* kinds of problems they face, his argument is hard to resist. But if he wants us to believe also that our faculty for bisociation can be relied on to select in advance—if need be, unconsciously—ideas that are preadapted to the *particular* problem in question, this again implies an element of clairvoyance that many would find too high a price to pay. (As to this, my suspicion is that Koestler himself would rather *welcome* scientific grounds for taking clairvoyance seriously, so there is a real bone of contention here.)

(*2*) THE TERMS "HOLON" AND "HOLARCHY" too are capable of serving a useful purpose in science, with certain qualifications. During the last 75 or 100 years, the natural evolution of scientific thought has finally permitted scientists to move beyond the kind of analytical studies that Goethe, Schiller, and William Blake condemned as the monopoly of the Newtonian method; and they have been able, as a result, to begin reconstructing a picture of natural objects and systems as "wholes" made up of units or "parts" related together in a kind of superordination and subordination that is at once structural and functional.

This change is evident in physics, with the development of crystallography and the theory of solids. It can be seen in chemistry, with the decipherment of complex organic molecules and macromolecules; and it reappears in biology with the study of physiological systems inaugurated by Claude Bernard, and the rise of effective theories of cell biology. Despite Goethe, indeed, this project was already there *in petto* in the writings of Newton himself with his general concept of Divinely ordained "active forces" capable of maintaining providential harmonies in the relationships between

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the "particles" of Nature. Up to now, however, there has been no commonly agreed term for describing the features that are shared by, e.g., atoms (in their relations to electrons on the one hand, and to molecules on the other), by cells (in their relations to chromosomes and mitochondria on the one hand and to bodily organs on the other), and by human beings (in their relations to their own limbs and organs on the one hand, and to social institutions on the other). In Koestler's terminology, all three types of thing alike can be referred to as "holons": i.e. units that share the crucial property of being, in their various ways, wholes as well as parts. And the larger system of relationships in which "holons" of different orders of complexity are linked together (e.g. chromosomes, cells, bodily organs, and the entire human individual) he would have us refer to as a "holarchy."

If this is put forward simply as a terminological proposal, it has genuine merits. There are some real occasions on which it would be useful for scientists to mark the Janus-faced character of different natural systems (as being both wholes with their own parts, and also parts of larger wholes) by the use of some common, recognised term; and I myself know of no serious rival to "holon." All the same, this usage is not likely to sweep the scientific field. Even though scientists of many kinds have begun to move away from their earlier analytical preoccupation with material composition, or "parts", into a more systemic and constructive consideration of "wholes", the basic character of their enterprise still requires them to pay less attention to general likenesses than to specific differences. For scientific purposes, it is usually more important to be able to tell different kinds of cells (or institutions, or molecules) apart than it is to lump all these things together as sharing a common "holonhood." I would be personally inclined to predict that these neologisms of Koestler's will make their appearance more often in public lectures, and other similar "popular" presentations of science, than they will in the professional scientific journals. And this is not something that Koestler will be entitled to take umbrage at: it is, in the classical sense of Greek philosophy, a matter of *anagke* or "necessity." With that single qualification, holons and holarchies deserve a respectful nod.

(*3*) ONE PARTICULAR FEATURE of the overall cosmic holarchy, however, has apparently ended up being less than fully functional. Somehow or other, human beings have ended up with brains maladapted to their actual place in the holarchic system. Not for the first time, Koestler argues, biological evolution has led to the appearance of a species one of whose crucial parts is not up to standard. When *homo sapiens* was ready to appear, the necessary neurological resources were not available among his evolutionary precursors, and the human brain came out as a botched job. To be precise: the neural pathways linking the cerebral neocortex to the deeper parts of the brain were not up to the needs of human existence. As a result, the human species was left with two counterproductive tendencies. It lacked the equipment necessary to ensure that Reason could maintain a general control over Emotion; and, more specifically, it developed a liability to be carried away by emotions of loyalty to any larger group or institution. These deficiencies, which Koestler speaks of as the "paranoid streak" in human nature, are the source of the fanaticism, bloodthirstiness, belligerency, and other mayhem that have disfigured human history; and, in the Nuclear age, they threaten the very survival of the species.

This hypothesis is, of course, a very complex one, with components of several different kinds; and it is hard to comment on it briefly. We may begin at the end, with the psychological components of the theory. It certainly seems to be the case that human beings turn out to be too biddable and compliant to authority for their own future good. (Koestler cites Stanley Milgram's famous experiments on the limits of obedience to good purpose.) It certainly appears that we need to give more thought than we have done hitherto to ways of encouraging the contrary elements in human nature, which are capable of expressing themselves in autonomous, independent and self-reliant conduct: the elements that enable any human individual to resist the impulses to conformity and "stand up to group pressures." But it is much less clear what, if anything, these human frailties have to do with *paranoia*. If we are going to give these tendencies a psychiatric label, we would do better to see them as probably springing from obsessional or depressive, rather than from paranoid sources. (Paranoid individuals are, in fact, driven by a suspicion of other people's motives that leads them to separate themselves from the group, rather than to cling to it with the kind of fanaticism Koestler is concerned about.)

This criticism is not a piece of pedantry. For one of the problems with Koestler's science is his tendency to prefer sloppy phrase-making to exactitude. When he says "paranoid streak", he does not really mean the term "paranoid" to be taken seriously—it is just a *façon de parler*. And when he talks, likewise, about Human Reason not having a proper control over Emotion, and associates this diagnosis with faulty connections between the neocortex and the deeper brain, it is once again unclear just how seriously he means to be taken. After all, he must know that such grand abstract nouns as Reason and Emotion need to be treated with greater circumspection than he displays. It is not as though any human behaviour

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were *purely* the outcome of "rationality" or *purely* the effect of "emotionality" or "affect." To parody Immanuel Kant, we might say, "Affect without Cognition is undirected, Cognition without Affect is powerless." Even the creative intellectual activities of a mathematical genius have an "affective" component.

As for the neurological element in Koestler's theory: identifying the neocortex as the seat of rationality and goodness, and the deeper parts of the brain as the seat of evil, stereotypic emotionality alone, is far too simple. This attempt to localise "psychological faculties" in particular parts of the brain is just too crude to fit the facts.

The notion of an "evolutionary mistake" is even more perplexing. On the one hand, given all the additional resources of Lamarckian inheritance that Koestler wishes us to accept, the evolution of a badly botched brain would certainly argue a seriously misguided failure of foresight, or pre-adaptation, in the evolutionary changes that produced the genus *Homo*. (If Lamarckism were correct, could not such a "blunder" have been avoided?) From the neo-Darwinian standpoint, on the other hand, it is not hard to see that group loyalty and conformism would have been *highly adaptive* at an earlier, formative stage in human history: those of our anthropoid precursors who lacked these psychological characteristics would quickly have fallen victim to their more aggressive, tightly-bonded cousins. In what sense, then, was this a "mistake"? Rather, it seems to be an earlier evolutionary *success*, whose consequences we now need to grow out of. . . .

BEFORE WE MOVE ON to larger issues, two last things about Koestler's general way of handling scientific topics need to be remarked on. To begin with, the basic ambiguity in all his expositions—are his arguments really scientific or philosophical?—is apparent in the ways he treats his opponents and his supporters, respectively. He speaks of his supporters (*We*) as a loosely structured group of people with open minds and good will, who differ about many questions and have no wish to impose their ideas upon others. By contrast, he portrays his opponents (*They*) as an established scientific cabal, organised in defence of an entrenched, but outdated orthodoxy. As an outsider to both parties, I can report for a fact that the people he castigates as "dogmatic neo-Darwinists" are quite as much of a mixed bag as the members of his Alpbach Symposium, being sharply divided about many issues, and in no position to patch together any agreed system of dogmas (even if they wanted to); while many scientists of other persuasions perceive his own team of right-minded scientists as Koestler's Alpbach Mafia.

The dogmatism Koestler attributes to "the scientific establishment" is, in fact, a rhetorical fiction. So far as matters of theory and doctrine go, a science like biology is always full of diversity. (Anyone who could get general agreement about basic theoretical issues from James Watson and Ernst Mayr, Richard Lewontin *and* Edward Wilson, would have performed a miracle!) Correspondingly, the historical changes by which such a science advances involve kaleidoscopic processes of temporary association and dissociation, with transient alliances and oppositions continually forming and reforming. Thus, in the actual business of working science, there is no place for people to be, permanently, either *For* or *Against* any general doctrine such as "reductionism." There are merely periods, and fields of research, in which it is timely and fruitful to use (say) analytical methods rather than methods of composition, or *vice versa*. As a result, working scientists are generally prepared to be opportunistic, both in their professional alliances and in their philosophical commitments. To insist that analytical methods of doing science are either *always* or *never* right and proper—that is, to embrace either Reductionism or alternatively Holism (or Anti-Reductionism) as an entirely general posture—is to leave science for metaphysics.

THIS SAME AMBIGUITY in the status of Koestler's arguments is evident, also, in his very different ways of criticising scientific views that he objects to, and agrees with, respectively. In playing off scientific and philosophical issues against one another, in fact, he resorts to something of a double game. When he is on the attack, he casts his scientific opponents in the role of philosophers, and then ridicules the supposed "philosophical implications" of their positions. In putting forward his own views, on the other hand, he strikes a scientific pose, and asks only that his novel ideas prove their worth in the explanations of the future.

In criticising the neo-Darwinists, for instance, he resorts (p.170) to the time-honoured device of pointing out that the basic concepts and terms of neo-Darwinian theory are *interdefinable*, and claiming that they are on this account *tautological*, and therefore *empty*. Yet this "interdefinability" is, in fact, a feature of *all* general systems of scientific theory—the same thing is true, for instance, of the terms "force", "mass", and "momentum" in Newton's mechanics—and it does nothing whatever to undercut the *explanatory power* of such theories. Indeed, when the tables are turned and it suits his own purposes, Koestler is quite ready to defend his own theories against just the same criticism. ("One of the tests of a theory", he says (p.67), "is that, once grasped, it appears self-evident.")

Still: it is time to leave these disagreements over

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the status and validity of Koestler's detailed scientific discussions. The really significant points raised by his enterprise go far beyond all scientific minutiae. Hence we must now turn and ask, "What is the undercurrent of philosophical criticism that informs all of Koestler's objections—whether against Behaviourist psychology, or neo-Darwinian biology, or Quantum mechanics, or statistical interpretations of History?" As will be apparent by now, one word continually reappears in all of Koestler's scientific books, as the focus of his objections: the word "random." It is any suggestion of randomness, or chance, or indeterminacy, that awakens his distaste and attracts his condemnation; and we may now enquire into the deeper, philosophical roots of that distaste.

A BRIEF DIGRESSION, at this point, into the history of earlier philosophy will help us to recognise the ancestry of Koestler's position. There is a well-known family of philosophical positions which reject *historical contingency* as incompatible with the "rationality" of things. In everyday life, we frequently brush aside puzzling or distressing historical occurrences as having "just turned out that way"; and this commonsensical view of History, as having an essentially contingent component, is reflected in any number of familiar idioms—"You never can tell", "There's no knowing", "History is full of surprises", and so on. (American usage has a convenient term for this component: the word *happenstance*.)

Some philosophers, notably many of the "rationalists" of the late 17th and early 18th centuries, have been unable to reconcile themselves to this way of thinking. Whatever *did* happen, they have argued, *had to* happen just as it did; and if we are unable to see the deeper reasons for any particular occurrence that is simply a limitation of our understanding. If, for instance, we fully grasped the essential "inner nature" of Julius Caesar, we would be able (Leibniz claimed) to see that the historical unfolding of that essential nature *necessitated* his crossing of the Rubicon.

The rationalists' resistance to "happenstance" extended from their philosophy of history into their view of science. An empiricist like Isaac Newton might be quite ready to accept the structure and laws of the World of Nature as he found them, and might attribute the fact that they are thus and not otherwise to "God's mere Will." God was entirely free, in Newton's view, to decide just when, how, and in what form His Creation was to take place. But Leibniz could not rest content with the arbitrariness of this view: "What if God had, by some whim, chosen to create an *irrational* world? Surely, there must be some *sufficient reason* for God to choose the particular structure and laws He did?..."

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The symbolic issue around which this dispute turned was the stability of the planetary system. The new physical theory of the planetary mechanics put forward in Newton's *Principia* strongly suggested that the Sun and planets *in fact would* continue to move as they do for the indefinite future, without falling into disorder; but it could not prove that this *must happen*, and Newton did not absolutely rule out the possibility that slight deviations introduced by the mutual interactions of the planets might conceivably add up, instead of cancelling out, and so end by disrupting the whole system. "But never mind", he added, "God could always step in if necessary, and restore the original equilibrium by His own supernatural Action."

This final comment filled Leibniz with scorn. "It shows a very low view of the Creator", he wrote to Princess Caroline, "to imagine that He may have to step in from time to time, like an imperfect watchmaker, and set his Creation to rights. . . ." Quite the contrary: from Leibniz's point of view, it was evident that God *must* have created His World in such a form that it operated perfectly—it would have been *less than rational* for Him to have done otherwise. And if Newton's system of natural philosophy failed to reveal the "sufficient reasons" that underlay the Laws of Motion and Gravitation and made the necessity of the Natural Order apparent to the rational mind, so much the worse for Newton. As Leibniz saw it, any acceptable system of physics had to take its place within a larger Theodicy: i.e. a system of ideas capable of demonstrating the rational *rightness, propriety, and necessity* of the Divine Creation.

IN PHYSICS, this attempt to explain away the contingencies of empirical Nature in terms of rational necessities in the Divine Mind did not survive Kant's criticism. If the universal Laws of Nature had any "necessary" basis—as Kant replied—this must lie in the structures of *human* thought, and there was no occasion for us to second-guess the Creator. Yet, when the theory of organic evolution was put forward some 60 or 70 years later, the same objection was raised all over again. Charles Darwin, too, gave an account of human and animal evolution that left the appearance of our species as a matter of "happenstance." He offered some interesting and illuminating suggestions about how the human species *had in fact* evolved; but he did nothing to prove that this *must have happened* as it did. If the history of the Earth had followed a different course, there might perfectly well have ended up being no *Homo sapiens*—even no animal life—at all. It all depended on what the physical conditions were, and what variant forms of life happened to appear, at each time and place in the evolutionary sequence.

This feature of Darwin's theory was violently attacked, by both theologians and philosophers, in terms that anticipate Koestler's own criticisms of contemporary neo-Darwinism. Anglican theologians saw it as eliminating Divine Wisdom and Providence from the origins of the human race; while secular rationalists saw it as denying the Rationality of Nature. In a Darwinian world shaped by so-called "natural selection", George Bernard Shaw declared, "only fools and rascals could bear to live." From the mid-19th century on, mankind was confronted by the awesome thought that, if past History had been different, Nature too would have been different, and there might well have been no such thing as mankind; while, if future History goes as it well may, Nature too will change in drastic ways, and mankind will yet cease to be.[2] Once again, this Darwinian conclusion provoked massive denial. And the central element of *contingency* in Darwinism has long delayed the understanding and acceptance of Darwinian biology in countries strongly influenced by philosophical rationalism.This has been especially true of Lamarck's own homeland, France. There, one may see Jacques Monod's recent best-selling book on evolutionary biology, *Le Hasard et la Nécessité*, as an attempt to make Darwin palatable to a Cartesian culture. After all, Monod argues, there *is* a kind of "rational necessity" to Darwinism; only it is one that operates on the ecological rather than on the biomolecular level.

THERE IS THUS nothing particularly idiosyncratic about Koestler's attack on neo-Darwinism. It is, in fact, all of a piece with a much more general rejection of contingency or happenstance in the scientific world-picture. Darwinism is unacceptable to him because it only tries to show us how evolution *in fact* happened: it does not attempt to prove that it *must have* progressed beyond, e.g., "the rabbit, the herring, or even the bacterium", still less that it *must have* produced the genus *Homo*. Above all, it is unacceptable to him, in the same way as

[2] On the first page of *Janus*, Koestler remarks—rather oddly—that "mankind as a whole has had to live with the prospect of its extinction as a *species*" only since "the first atomic bomb outshone the sun over Hiroshima." Yet that gloomy prospect was already a familiar one, given the evidence of the geological record alone, some 10 or 15 years before the publication of Darwin's *Origin of Species*. In particular, it informs much of the pessimism of the time, apparent in Alfred Tennyson's great poem, "In Memoriam":

Are God and Nature then at strife
That Nature lends such evil dreams?
So careful of the type she seems,
So careless of the single life . . .

"So careful of the type?" but no,
From scarped cliff and quarried stone
She cries, "A thousand types are gone:
I care for nothing, all shall go."

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behaviouristic psychology, because the basic processes of variation or mutation seem to him to rest on "blind", "random", "chance" or "undirected" phenomena.[3] Like all the other sciences whose lack of "directedness" Koestler complains about, then, neo-Darwinism falls short in the last resort in the same way, and for the same kind of reasons, that Newton's physics did for Leibniz. All of them accept the "contingency" of natural events too easily, and so fail to demonstrate the necessary Wisdom and Order, Rationality and Providence of Nature. In a word: by the standards of philosophical rationalism they are *irrational*, and so unfit to take their place within the larger framework of a rationally intelligible Theodicy.

THE QUESTION ARISES: Why should anybody place so high a priority on constructing a Theodicy? Why should anyone find the contingent character of the empirical world so offensive? Why, that is, should scientists be required not just to *explain* the phenomena of Nature, but also to *justify* them as being "rationally necessary"? Here the comparison between Koestler and Leibniz can be taken a step further. Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz was born in Leipzig at the close of the Thirty Years War. He grew up in a country devastated by the 17th-century conflicts between Protestants and

[3] Those who insist on the "randomness" of biological mutations—whether to assert it, like Monod, or to deny it, as Koestler does—are generally arguing for philosophical rather than for scientific positions. Among evolutionists, Jacques Monod may make an issue of the "chance" character of mutations when arguing a Cartesian case, in a work of *haute vulgarisation*; but more authoritative treatises, such as Ernst Mayr's *Animal Species and Evolution* (1963), tend to employ more exact language. When used in a strictly biological context, indeed, the very term "random" has a quite obscure sense. Suppose we take as our paradigmatic example of a purely "random" process the unpredictable disintegration of a single radioactive atom: biological mutations certainly need not be assumed to be "random" in that sense.

On the contrary, everything in the evolutionary process may perfectly well be *caused*. It is just that the causes that produce mutations (and so generate new evolutionary variants) do not seem preferentially "directed" toward the future good of the particular populations in which they occur. Rather, all the most powerful physiological mechanisms of genetic transmission apparently operate in ways that *shield* the genetic material from environmental influences—especially those that operate on individual organisms during their lifetimes—and this reduces the scope for Lamarckian inheritance of characteristics acquired during those lifetimes.

This observation is not, as Koestler apparently supposes, *incompatible with* truly "creative" evolutionary change. Quite the reverse: such processes as Alister Hardy's "progress by behavioural initiative"—which Koestler himself came so near to falling for—are quite capable of producing, by Darwinian means, results indistinguishable at first sight from those of Lamarckian inheritance.

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Catholics, so he could see for himself all around him the destructive effects of wedding theological dogma and local patriotism. The only hope of preventing further recurrences of fratricidal conflict, fuelled by religious loyalties, was to find a way of "grounding" the religious beliefs of all Christian denominations—and, ultimately, even the Oriental religions—on a common rational basis.

Leibniz was thus the first systematic *oecumenist*. Confronted by the results of an ideological catastrophe, he saw a rational reconciliation between the supporters of all religions as the only way of forestalling the End of the World, as civilised Europe had known it. Despite their strenuously intellectual procedures, accordingly, the deeper purposes of Leibniz's metaphysical inquiries were highly practical, even political. To accept the seeming contingency of things, and to permit shallow appeals to "God's mere Will", would invite fresh theological dissension and destroy the possibility of achieving an agreed basis for reconciliation. So, underlying Leibniz's *Monadology* and *Theodicy*, there was not just an intellectual, but also an ideological programme. Contingency in the operations of Nature and History represented for him, not merely a *philosophical misunderstanding*, but also a *political threat*.

Arthur Koestler was born into a world almost as confused and threatening as that which Leibniz knew. Growing up in Budapest in the years around the First World War, Koestler saw with his own eyes the collapse of the traditional dynastic system of European monarchies, and its replacement by a patchwork of squabbling nation-states. (Though the ideological themes used to justify the World Wars of the 20th century have been more secular than those of the 17th-century Wars of Religion, future historians may yet come to know the period from 1914 to 1945 as the Second Thirty Years War.) Whatever its defects, the Austro-Hungarian Empire under Franz Joseph had been a stable and reassuring "holarchy", and those who once knew this stability have never been wholly free of nostalgia for "the old days." How could any serious young intellectual grow to manhood in the wreckage of the Habsburg Era and not dream of some alternative, but equally comprehensive, system of international order? How could he, that is, avoid asking himself whether the international order might not be put on some other, more rational basis, about which people of open minds and good will from all nations might agree? And, if he was a young man of scientific inclinations, how could he avoid looking into, and being initially drawn toward, the claims of "scientific socialism"?

For such a one, the failure of Marxian theory to translate into humane political praxis, as chronicled in *Darkness at Noon* and *The God that Failed*, was no local or isolated deficiency. It was a failure, at one and the same time, on the intellectual, the political, and the scientific levels. In the Stoic sense of the term, it was a breakdown of "cosmopolis"—a failure of human beings to harmonise with the *logos* of Nature. Whatever virtues the theories of Marx and Engels might have had as pointers toward the structure of an Ideal Republic, these were not proof against the corruptions of real-life human nature. The same passions that the youthful Koestler had hoped to see turned to Good were, in actual historical fact, all too evidently directed toward Evil. The temptations of political power combined with the influence of nationalistic fervour to form a witches' brew, and neutralised the forces of Reason in the political realm. Experience with the actual historical realisation of "scientific socialism" in the Soviet Union demonstrated to Koestler, as to many others, that practical Politics belongs to the sphere of Sin, rather than to that of the Ideal. If human nature had not been at fault—if we humans had not been endowed with some basic psychopathological deficiency, some inherited fanaticism, some "paranoid streak"...—should not the Ideal Republic of the Reason, as dreamed of by the "scientific socialists", have been realisable in fact? Surely, if it had not been for this psychic deficiency, the God need not have Failed, the Noon would not have been filled with Darkness, the Night might not have been quite so full of Thieves.

I SHOULD PERHAPS, by way of a postscript, apologise to Arthur Koestler for construing his ideas in theological terms: sin, theodicy, the *logos*, and so on. Despite all his estrangements from political communism, he still remains as much of a scientifically-minded secularist as he was in his earlier socialist days. Although the structure and motivation of Koestler's arguments may be illuminated by placing them alongside those of Leibniz, it is probably nearer the mark, psychologically, to think of him as a latter-day Stoic. I say a Stoic, rather than an Epicurean, advisedly. It is his behaviourist and neo-Darwinist opponents who are the Epicureans of the contemporary scene, justifying personal equanimity by appeal to the moral indifference of natural phenomena. Koestler, by contrast, sees no hope for us unless we learn to harmonise the underlying *logos* of human nature with that of physical nature, into a unified "cosmopolis."

It is especially worth bearing the continued secular character of Koestler's thinking in mind, if we turn to look—in conclusion—at the therapy he prescribes for human disorders. Faced by the "paranoia" that he diagnoses as the root of our political afflictions, he turns to psychopharmacology as a source of hope. He comes, that is, to bring us not Grace, but a Pill. If the ultimate cause

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of our inability to establish a rational order in the political and social realm lies in the inadequate pathways joining our neo-cortex to the underlying parts of our brains, this is something which can be taken care of by straightforward biochemical means. We must just arrange for the pharmaceutical companies to develop a highly selective medicament, capable of preventing the "emotional" limbic system from dominating the "rational" neo-cortex. We shall then be able—at last—to usher in the Age of Reason.

For reasons temporarily beyond our control, the opening of the show may have been delayed, but now—though 75 years late—we shall be in a position to go ahead with it. For now we shall have the means to counteract group loyalty, misplaced obedience, and other irrationalities that have hitherto stood in the way of a rational world-order.

How should this pharmaceutical agent be administered? There are a dozen possible ways, Koestler tells us. If the effects of the agent are really so "cool", chances are that, in this pill-popping age, the younger generation will latch on to it without needing to be pressured. Otherwise, it may simply be added to the municipal water-supply, like fluoride. "But why bother with such picky objections?", he asks. "That's just a straightforward problem of practical administration, and we shall be able to solve it as we go along. . . ."

Unfortunately, this response will just not do. And the fact that Koestler does respond in this way shows that he has come through all his earlier political experiences with the innocence of his youthful socialism untouched. Far from being a matter of "practical administration" alone, the problem of governing the utilisation of his supposed "anti-paranoid drug" simply drives us back into the world of practical politics. For let us suppose that such an agent were available, and in mass production; and even, that its effects were all that Koestler imagines. How could we then ensure that the *political institutions* of all human societies and nations would operate in the ways required to prevent it from doing more harm than good? If there is one safe prediction to be made about the resulting state of affairs, it is surely this: that the political leaderships of the Superpowers would ensure a supply of fresh, drug-free mountain-spring water for their own Pretorian Guards, while the PLO and the IRA, likewise, would find their own ways of preventing the revolutionary fervour of their followers from being sapped by municipal drug-therapy—even if administered in the cause of "rationality."

THE SAD FACT IS that Psychopharmacology by itself holds out no more hope of eliminating fanaticism and conflict from the political sphere, and giving us the means of building a rational world order, than Marx's scientific socialism did. If anything, the general availability of Koestler's drug would only accelerate the coming of W. B. Yeats's new Behemoth. Failing the creation of new and powerful institutions of international cooperation, it would lead to a situation in which "the best" finally lost the last of their "conviction", while "the worst" retained all of their "passionate intensity."

For better or for worse, then, the fundamental problems of political reform remain what they have always been: namely, to devise new institutional arrangements that will enable human beings, just as they are—whether flawed by Sin, or by cerebral inadequacy—to resolve their conflicts of interest and ambition in juster and less bloody ways than has been the rule in the past. In dealing with this fundamental political task, nothing is more urgent than to tackle the painful, piece-by-piece business of institution-building, with all the patience, intelligence, and commitment to justice that we can command. Somewhere along this political road, there may yet turn out to be a place for Koestler's Pill. But, until the institutional reforms required in the political sphere have been carried much further, would not the availability of such a psychopharmacological agent be quite as much of a Threat as a Promise?

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Marina Warner

After Pieter der Hooch

1

The 3B has been found and sharpened on the tiger,
The paper laid out. Foolscap—quarto cramps the air
That must ventilate a text, not just lift
The centre, but each word buoyantly beside the other,
And every letter loose, unfastened from its neighbour.
The table surface a brown rectangle, otherwise bare.
Later in the writing, you'll put your watch aside,
Its heavy silver links collapsed one over the other,
The face turned away, its underside towards you
Where scratches as fine as wrinkles round the eyes
Deepen the metal's harsh surface glint.
Soon your pencil marks signs we know
How to interpret by that process of cognition
That is our own very ordinary miracle,
The Redskin's snapped twig and rustled foliage,
The pointer's pull to the spoor, the goliard of the bee.

2

Were I in the room, you would see me of course,
Not being blind. But you would not see me
As you see the material world you mark down.
Your eyes look into the wide interior of the real
And I am in another part of it, a room to one side,
A disorder of bottles and cotton wool,
The acrid warmth of nappies, tossed toys, damp cot.
My baby squirming. His lips part—to kiss,
To laugh, to bawl, to crow, to drool, to babble—
Does it matter? Such precise appellations fail to catch the flow
That makes a baby's talk a pure semantics of the senses.
I hold him on my hip, he arches and kicks and whoops
In a creditable attempt to assert he would be free.
We stand together in the doorway; it is ajar; the light is dim.

3

In the centre, the wooden table's laid with a green plastic cloth,
A counterfeit of woven cotton, embroidery and lace,
A water-jug, some peaches, a chipped saffron teapot,
The bag's identifying tag trailing from its lid,
The knub of a baguette, a butter dish all smeared,
Jams purple, pink and orange, just good for one last scrape,
Chips of eggshell on a plate, a drip of yellow on the cup.
Beyond this room in the middle, beyond mine, beyond yours,
The garden door is open and the light falls towards us,
White square on white squares, a warm hand laid on stone.
At Cloyes, as you have said, this light misses Flanders' gold,
Its way of soaking into red bricks laid trim edge to edge.
It's blue-grey here, of a ringdove's egg pallor,
And the skies mimic the unripeness of the green wheat of June.
Clouds heap up with bombast, blowsy, ill-defined,
Mistaking rhetoric for dignity, scale for harmonious proportion,
A clumsy drumroll for the lute's sweet arithmetic.
It's a language all the same; it'll do, more than that.
Through one room, then another, it speaks: the world's alight.

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A Special Book Section

Politics & World Affairs

The Unloved Ones

Democracy & Bureaucracy—By FERDINAND MOUNT

GOVERNMENT IS UNPOPULAR. That much is clear. Throughout the Western world and far beyond, the sense of government as something apart from and often opposed to ordinary people is growing. Incompetent, unjust, oppressive, insensitive, corrupt, slothful, swollen, parasitic—the epithets are various and so is the form of the complaints. For those who believe quite simply that the least government is the best government, it is possible to launch a radical and thoroughgoing critique of the growth of government; as soon as governments begin to usurp the decisions that ought to be left to individuals, inefficiency and injustice inevitably follow. The man in Whitehall does not know what is best for people; he does not know what people want; and he does not know how to allocate resources to satisfy those wants.

Social democrats, by contrast, have to be more cautious and limited in their attacks. They were, after all, first moved to political activity primarily in order to use the power of the state to alleviate poverty and to rectify injustice. They can say only that *there comes a point at which* the growth of the state begins to harm even those it was supposed to help. The most resonant statement of this foreboding in the present Parliament came from Mr Roy Jenkins: "I do not think that you can push public expenditure significantly above 60% and maintain the values of a plural society with adequate freedom of choice."

Full-blooded socialists cannot even talk like this. If they wish to criticise government, they can only attack "bureaucracy." That is, they are ready to point out the vices of government officials—sloth, incompetence, bumph-mania, pedantry and so on—without attributing to these vices any general or underlying cause beyond the weakness of the flesh. Why this caution? Does not the Left normally take pride in exposing connections between apparently unconnected things, in laying bare the gnarled and buried roots of actions, in ripping off bland masks to reveal motives unsuspected perhaps even by the wearers? Yet the malfeasance of bureaucrats is exempt from this process. Their overmightiness cannot be attributed to their historical position, for that would suggest that the accretion of power within the state apparatus *inevitably* generates abuse—which is not at all what good socialists wish to prove.

The dilemma of the Left is only an extreme instance of an embarrassment which is far more widely experienced. For most political animals except the relatively small band of thoroughgoing cradle libertarians have at some time and in some degree encouraged or approved the growth of government. This embarrassment may help to explain a certain reluctance to deal with the historical reality of the State and to explain with any precision the reasons for its remarkable growth over the past century. Hitherto, the debate has been mostly fragmentary and tentative. Only now that the state is so widely regarded as an uncontrollable monster is more attention being paid to the monster's evolution.

Geoffrey Fry, for example, in *The Growth of Government*[1] claims that there is no other published work which covers the development of the machinery of government in Britain since 1780. And indeed the paucity of material is remarkable when you consider the abundance dealing with, say, the rise of the Labour Party or the passing of the Reform Bills. The question Mr Fry sets himself is: who killed *laissez-faire*? He makes a sharp division between the Classical Economists on the one hand and the Fabians, the Marshallians and the Keynesians on the other. And he identifies as "the man who in Britain decisively undermined the position of *laissez-faire* in political philosophy: T. H. Green."

Before Green, we are told, the *laissez-faire* men were in charge. Afterwards, there is a total change of intellectual climate which fosters the growth of every kind of government supervision and control. Adam Smith implanted the notion of the Invisible Hand as the guiding principle of his "obvious and

[1] *The Growth of Government*. By GEOFFREY FRY. Frank Cass, £9.95.

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simple system of natural liberty." Bentham believed that governments should in general adopt *Be Quiet* as their motto. Ricardo believed that government intervention in trade was "justifiable in only two cases: first, to prevent a fraud, and, secondly, to certify a fact." Mill believed that "most things which are likely to be even tolerably done by voluntary associations should, generally speaking, be left to them."

Green, on the other hand, although a liberal and sympathetic to capitalism, took a positive view of the state.

> It is the business of the State not indeed directly to promote moral goodness, for that, from the very nature of moral goodness, it cannot do but to maintain the conditions without which a free exercise of the human faculties is impossible. [By 1880] a sense of the facts and necessities of the case had got the better of the delusive cry of liberty, and Act after Act had been passed preventing master and workman, parent and child, house-builder and house-holder from doing as they pleased, with the result of a great addition to the real freedom of society. The spirit of self reliance and independence was not weakened by those Acts. Rather it received a new development.

FROM THIS POSITION it is but a short step to the Webbs and the constitution of the Labour Party. Once this notion of "economic freedom" as of more solid value than "political freedom" enters into conventional wisdom, it is easy enough to see how politicians of all parties will embark without misgiving upon huge schemes of state control. What is remarkable to modern eyes, for example, about the Conservatives' vast enlargement of State control and the Welfare State between the wars—the Central Electricity Board, the BBC, BOAC and Neville Chamberlain's pensions and local government acts—is how easily such measures were swallowed. In Britain, despite the fears of bolshevism there seemed to exist very little principled opposition to State control as such; we were "all socialists nowadays"; and the experience of many other nations of Western Europe from the Bismarck era onwards was not dissimilar.

Now even though Green was, for example, Asquith's tutor, he could scarcely have whistled up the *Zeitgeist* single-handed. If you look more closely at Mr Fry's scheme, the black dividing lines begin to blur. We are reminded that the mercantilism which Adam Smith demolished was not nearly as imposing as Smith made it out to be; moreover, Smith himself admitted as duties of the state not merely defence and law and order but also that

> of erecting and maintaining those public institutions and those public works, which, though they may be in the highest degree advantageous to a great society are, however, of such a nature, that the profit could never repay the expense to any individual or small number of individuals.

Among these institutions he included schools, roads, public health and the relief of the poor. Similarly Bentham recognised that it might be "necessary or expedient" for the state to interfere in such things. For Nassau Senior too, at least in later life,

> the only rational foundation of government, the only foundation of a right to govern and of a correlative duty to obey, is expediency—the general benefit of the community. It is the duty of a government to do whatever is conducive to the welfare of the governed.

Utilitarian theory took and could take no other criterion but expediency in determining the limits of the state.

BEHIND THE CONVENTIONAL VIEW that the role of the State was decided by a series of sharp intellectual breaks—from mercantilism to *laissez-faire* and then on from *laissez-faire* to collectivism—we glimpse a rather more gradual progression in which theorists are as much trying to make sense of or justify practice as to change it. The Webbs cannot take all the blame; nor can the Shaftesburys and Chadwicks. It is too easy to assert, as H. S. Ferns does in his spirited polemic *The Disease of Government,*[2] that "the main responsibility for our present state rests with the avowed liberal and democratic politicians and bureaucrats and the solutions they have sought in the presence of the disorders and shortcomings in the market-exchange economy itself." These persons are described as in the grip of "dogma" or "faith" in government. And yet for the most part, the growth of the British Welfare State—and again, this may well be true of Bismarckian welfare states on the Continent too—is characterised by a remarkable absence of dogma, except, if you like, the Edward VIII dogma that "something must be done." Even schemes like the Butler Education Act, the National Health Service and the Beveridge plans for social security contained a considerable degree of improvisation, adjustments to the status quo, agreements with private institutions and even mimicking of private institutions, such as the pretence seriously maintained until very recently that the new pensions and benefits were not the result of redistributing money from workers to non-workers but rather represented the fruits of a kind of insurance.

A further theory mentioned in both Fry and Ferns and in Peacock and Wiseman's *The Growth*

[2] *The Disease of Government.* By H. S. FERNS. Temple Smith, £6.50.

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of Public Expenditure in the United Kingdom, 1890–1955 (1961), is that it is war or social crisis that stimulates a further advance in government control. True, it is difficult to demob bureaucrats, and war does tend to concentrate expectations and generate blueprints for the post-War world—which do tend to involve an extension of government control. On the other hand, war and the preparation for war also tend to freeze developments in social policy; there is no time and no cash to spare from attending peace conferences and making guns. A backlog of blue-prints builds up; it certainly did between 1935 and 1945. A nation mobilised is a nation bureaucratised. Even so, in the longer perspective it fits the facts better to regard war as a hiccup in a process of otherwise steady growth rather than to regard, say, the Attlee government as having taken a radically new direction in 1945—which would attribute to politicians and political parties a false detachment from the spirit of the age. And as Ann Robinson remarks in *Parliament and Public Spending,*[3] "if the theory were accurate, there would not have been a rapid or sharp rise in public spending during the 1960s and 1970s in any country which did not face a crisis or war."

[3] *Parliament and Public Spending.* By ANN ROBINSON. Heinemann Educational, £8.75.

FRY SEEMS ON FIRMER GROUND when he attributes the growth of government to "the scale of social problems posed by industrialisation, urbanisation, and rapid population growth", or as Green put it, "the massing of population without regard to conditions of health." And if influences—or rather witnesses—are needed for the change of public attitudes, they are more likely to be found in Southey, Carlyle and Dickens. The Victorians reacted more to the stench of the factory smoke than to the brilliance of economic or social theory. Ann Robinson quotes Adolf Wagner's threefold division of the causes of increased public spending in the 19th century: regulation to control increasing economic specialisation and intercourse and the social frictions caused thereby; state participation in vast new enterprises that were thought too risky and expensive for private capital; and social services which, it seemed, could not be fairly priced in the market, such as education and public health. Or in Marxist terms: the full development of the capitalist system generates the need for Government expenditure to keep the workers quiet.

These reasons may be based on false premises. It may not be the case that these new enterprises were too vast to be financed by private capital; in Britain, for example, private capital did finance the railways. But if Wagner's reasons are taken as

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interpretations of why the Victorians *thought* the state needed to intervene—typically first to "regulate" or "inspect", later to "reorganise" and finally to "control"—then the reasons are at least psychologically convincing. The Victorians were awed by the *size* of the society they had created: the scale of its enterprises, the hugeness of its cities and of the slums, above all, by the seemingly unending growth of the population. And this awe was only possible because of the growing speed, permeation and extension of communication. The Victorians knew. They knew the statistics. The full horrors of poverty and disease were graphically conjured up for them in Blue Books and magazine fiction; the contrasts between wealth and poverty were made concrete to them.

Did something similar, if on a much smaller scale, take place in the 1960s? Were the newly affluent suddenly made conscious of the gaps in wealth, employment and health between North and South—in the USA, Italy and France scarcely less than in Britain? Is it too fanciful to suggest that television, for the first time trying its wings as a medium for active reportage and criticism, might have helped to encourage demands that "something must be done"—a something which only the state was big enough and powerful enough to do?

THIS SUGGESTION—that the growth of government may not be wholly a result of collectivist dogma but is often simply an emotional response to an awesome problem—is worth labouring for several reasons. First, it may help to dissipate the pessimistic tone of some diatribes against government and the feeling that attempts to control public expenditure are doomed to failure. Ann Robinson's account of the work of the Expenditure Committee of the House of Commons between 1970–76 looks back sadly on the high hopes that the committee would, as David Marquand put it, "provide Parliament with some countervailing influence to the tremendous growth in the power of the Executive over the last century." Peter Jay expected the Committee "to monitor the activities of the executive at the formative stage: namely, when and where the strategic allocations of resources are made." Alas for all these hopes. "With the exception of the report on British Leyland there is no evidence that any work produced by the Expenditure Committee in six years has contributed significantly to any single House of Commons debate." Committee chairmen continue to ride their hobby-horses, MPs either don't turn up or ask the wrong questions or summon the wrong witnesses. Until the Expenditure Committee has the power to alter the Estimates and the Public Expenditure White Papers, Ann Robinson believes that Parliament will never really increase its power or influence over public spending.

And yet surely she has broken off the story at the wrong point. Far from the growth in public spending being impossible to control, it turns out to be rather easy, granted the political will. To say that "the experience of 'cash limits' from 1976 . . . [has] created a new problem of 'shortfall' (underspending)" which "demonstrates the limitations of the Central Government's power" is to miss the point. We should have such problems. The purpose of cash limits was not to find a more precise aiming device; it was to produce a sharp cutting edge. Similarly, Professor Ferns underestimates the importance of the Labour Government's U-turn by attributing it entirely to the influence of the International Monetary Fund. The turn-round in Labour attitudes had begun considerably earlier than December 1976. Anthony Crosland, for example, had told the local authorities that "the party's over" in May 1975; cash limits were finally adopted in April 1976. The U-turn was painful for the Labour Party but, *pace* Professor Ferns, it *was*, in its early stages at least, "a product of the processes of British political life." And the influence of Select Committees in demonstrating just how far out of control public expenditure was in the mid-1970s should not be underestimated. Perhaps the best proof of the growing effectiveness of Select Committees is the fear and loathing which their activities provoke in those who believe in strong party government, such as Michael Foot.

THE CONVENTIONAL WISDOM has changed in a bewilderingly short time; less than twenty years separate us from the moment when the resignation of an entire Treasury team on the grounds that the government was spending too much money could be shrugged off by the Prime Minister as "a little local difficulty." The Institute of Economic Affairs had been founded a year earlier and was in its early days regarded as a cranks' outfit. Gradually its swashbuckling energies captured an audience which grew as experience first hinted and finally trumpeted that the IEA was right. Its study of markets and pricing systems has led it further and further afield into issues of social policy that had previously been regarded as settled between sensible men—such as state education and the legal privileges and coercive practices of trade unions. In *The Coming Confrontation*[4] F. A. Hayek, Max Hartwell and Norman Gash combine with other distinguished academics and politicians under the generalship of the Duke of Edinburgh (who apart from a tendency to say royal things such as "reality is like a lettuce" is perfectly sound on Intellectual Dissent and the Reversal of Trends) to examine the

[4] *The Coming Confrontation: Will the Open Society Survive to 1989?* Edited by ARTHUR SELDON. Institute of Economic Affairs, £5.40, paper £2.80.

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prospects for the survival of the Open Society in the face of the bureaucracy and the trade unions.

Mr Peter Jenkins in *The Guardian* criticises what he sees as the split mood of this eclectic array of contributors:

> They have acquired . . . habits of mind more often associated with the left. For example, they seem able to combine the belief that history is on their side with the conviction that superior forces are combining against them . . . on the one hand the tide of statism flows relentlessly forward, on the other the philosophy of the free market is gaining ground.

Yet is this not the spirit of Agincourt as well as of the Communist Manifesto—to assume that your opponents are vastly superior in numbers and arms but that you will conquer by reason of the rightness of your strategy and the purity of your heart?

But I think Mr Jenkins is right in assuming that the New Libertarians do have something in common with the old Left, namely the tacit assumption that their opponents are as intellectually intense as they are. And it is true that by assuming that your opponents are motivated solely by rigid dogma, you may reinforce your own tendency to dogmatise. It is, I think, a defect of the IEA that its pamphleteers attribute to their opponents the same intellectual intensity of intention as they have themselves. Burning as they are with a zeal to demonstrate the beauty of the market—its flexibility, its fertility, its humanity—they imagine those who are responsible for or in some way give approval to the present degree of state control are all burning with an equivalent zeal for collectivism.

IF THIS WERE SO, their prejudices would indeed be hard to dislodge: similarly if all bureaucrats and politicians were motivated exclusively by the desire to cling on to power and if possible extend it—as posited by James Buchanan, Gordon Tulloch and other practitioners of *The Economics of Politics* [5]—then they would be impossible to shift. But as Jo Grimond pointed out in a telling contribution from the only practising politician present at this symposium, politicians do *not* always maximise power; they do not always maximise their length of time in office; nor even do they always attempt to produce an economic cycle to suit their electoral chances. Sentiment, the rush of business, genuine devotion to principle, plain incompetence—all may interfere with the ruthless pursuit of self-interest. It is hard to quarrel with the conclusion Mr Grimond

[5] *The Economics of Politics*. Institute of Economic Affairs, £3.00.

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reaches in his book *The Common Welfare* [6]:

> The intrusive governments of modern times are an interest, or bundle of interests on their own. The new study of the economics of politics and the discussion of "public choice" by Professor Buchanan and others have done good service in drawing attention to the self-interested motives of governments and their officials. But I believe that they give too little credit to disinterest and public spirit.

Mr Grimond himself is a genuine pluralist, by which I mean that he does not envisage a neat, universally applicable pattern of individual institutions like some anarchists or free market enthusiasts but rather insists upon the necessity of the higgledy-piggledy; a good society can be based only upon a multitude of overlapping principles and institutions. There are lessons to be learnt from the National Health Service just as there are from Mr Iain Noble's Gaelic college on the Isle of Skye and the Mondragon co-operative in Spain. And yet in its search for institutions which are at the same time practical and humane the book has a more consistent purpose than many more apparently systematic treatises. Mr Grimond confuses only when he chooses to describe himself as of "the new Left—I know Left is an imprecise and misleading word—but what other is there to describe the progressive, populist democratic side of politics?" Unfortunately, the term has already been appropriated by groups which are entirely opposed to almost everything that Mr Grimond believes in, such as individual liberty and a delicate sense of the need for tolerance and restraint in the interests of social cohesion.

HOW HAS THE LEFT, new or old, reacted to the revolt against government? It has often been taken as a paradox that while people have turned against state control—the characteristic feature of proper socialism—within many European working-class parties proper socialists have come to predominate, or support has switched from social democratic parties to the communist party or to various Maoist and Trotskyist factions. In some countries the far Left appears to be gaining votes as fast as it is losing minds. Michael Hatfield in his account of labour policy-making between 1970 and 1975, *The House The Left Built,*[7] now and then seems to be suggesting that there is indeed a puzzle here. Labour activists, we are told, had been disenchanted by the record of the 1964–70 government. The way to restore enthusiasm was for the party to heal the breach with the trade unions caused by *In Place of Strife* and to work out a more full-bloodedly radical programme. Mr Hatfield gives a fascinating account of the internal strife which culminated in *Labour's Programme 1976,* the most socialist programme produced by the party for forty years.

And yet in a way he gives the plot away in his preface. The main reason why the Left triumphed was that Harold Wilson was virtually absent. He spent the first six months out of office writing his "personal record" of the Labour government. His colleagues thought that he took "a good 18 months" to readjust to leading the party in opposition. Even after that, he was nowhere near as active in party infighting as Attlee and Gaitskell before him and Callaghan after him. And since the beginning of the Labour Party, it has always been true that if the leader does not vigorously wield his power on behalf of the Right and the Parliamentary party, the Left-wing predominance in the constituencies will be strongly felt in the National Executive; if two or three of the leaders of the big unions happen to be Leftish sympathisers, the Left is in clover. None of this necessarily implies that Labour Party members have turned to the Left in large numbers, although we do know that the decline of the political party as a live institution—a decline not confined to Labour—has provided fresh opportunities for the Left. But in general the rise of the Left within the policy-making part of the Labour Party reflects more a failure of leadership in Wilson's later years than a shift of ideological fervour among party members, let alone among Labour voters—who dislike paying high taxes as much as anyone.

THE RISE OF "Eurocommunism" may be a somewhat similar bogus paradox, in which national historical accidents come together to present a puzzling pattern. Roy Godson and Stephen Haseler have produced a clear and unpretentious analysis—*Eurocommunism—Implications for East and West*[8]—which keeps the phenomenon within inverted commas without trying to play down its more seductive features. In particular, the distinction is established between what Eurocommunists say and what they do. The joint declaration by Marchais and Berlinguer on political freedom is impeccable. And yet within their own parties there is no freedom of discussion, no democratic system of election and no dissent is tolerated (although the Spanish Communists are somewhat more relaxed). They remain committed to revolutionary goals and, again except for the Spaniards, still basically take the Soviet Union as their model. And even Carillo says, "Before being a

[6] *The Common Welfare.* By JO GRIMOND. Temple Smith, £7.50.

[7] *The House The Left Built.* By MICHAEL HATFIELD. Gollancz, £8.50.

[8] *Eurocommunism: Implications for East and West.* By ROY GODSON and STEPHEN HASELER. Macmillan Press, £8.95.

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Social Democrat, I would be a Maoist, Trotskyist, terrorist." Nor is it easy for the layman to understand any effective difference between "dictatorship of the proletariat", and Gramsci's "hegemony of the working-class." Indeed, the very variety of CP tactics, so thoughtfully tailored to their political strength in each country, would suggest that these liberal declarations were merely tactical if they themselves did not quite casually admit as much, when questioned by censorious hard-liners.

The French and Italian CPs are presented with tactical questions of great difficulty. They have inherited from the Second World War a position as the second party in a Parliamentary system. The French CP is desperately trying to hang on to that status, the Italian CP to advance from it. The prime difficulty is precisely that while the terror of Communism may have abated somewhat, in outlook the electorate in both countries seems to be becoming less socialist rather than more; the Party's commitment to state control has to be played down rather than trumpeted. Is it possible for a Communist Party to come to power through the ballot-box and then consolidate its hold on power in an articulate modern nation? The Chilean example is not encouraging.

THE PHENOMENON OF Eurocommunism, no less than the apotheosis of the Institute of Economic Affairs, is an indication of the revolt against the state and of the adjustments that this forces upon political parties of all sorts.

For this explosion of popular feeling is not an unmixed blessing to the conservative parties either. It forces them to confront questions which have been allowed to lie dormant for years. The National Health Service, for example. Jo Grimond echoes the general view: "I have never believed that a very small increase in general welfare or efficiency justified causing a serious unhappiness to a small number of people." At present the NHS does not work brilliantly; there are delays, equipment is out-of-date, there are nasty strikes: but its shortcomings do not on the whole cause serious unhappiness even to a small number of people. Can we be sure that a radical reform of its financing—involving charges to the patient or genuine insurance schemes—would not cause such unhappiness? And even if we are sure, how do we reassure the voters? The anxiety that under any radical reform poor patients might be as ill-treated as they can be in the United States goes very deep. The National Health Service is only one reminder that part at least of the bureaucratic empire is historically based not upon egalitarian or collectivist dogma so much as on a sentiment of charity which cannot be disgraced by even the best economic logic.

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Actions & Reactions

The Middle East—By HAROLD BEELEY

THE FLOW OF WRITING on Middle Eastern politics shows no sign of slackening, and this with good reason. It is an area in which the superpowers still have some latent freedom of manoeuvre. The confrontation of Israel and her Arab neighbours is a conflict not only of local interests but of principles of universal concern. And for readers in this country it has a nostalgic appeal as the region in which Britain held the last remnants of her imperial heritage.

Three of the works under review are based very largely on the archives of the British Foreign and Colonial Offices. There are those who believe that the release of these documents to public view after no more than 30 years is an unacceptable source of potential embarrassment to actual and former public servants, and is consequently likely to impose a restraint on the free expression of opinion which officials owe to the Government they serve. I do not think this risk weighs sufficiently in the balance against the contribution made by relatively recent source material to the understanding of current affairs. But those whose words, written under the pressure of events and with an immediate purpose, are selected with hindsight for embodiment in the historical record do have a reasonable claim that their intentions should be fairly represented.

On this score they can justly feel aggrieved by Martin Gilbert. The later chapters of his book *Exile and Return*,[1] dealing with the period between Hitler's accession to power in Germany and the aftermath of the Second World War, combine the stories of the Jewish tragedy in Europe and the development of British policy in and concerning Palestine into a single chronological narrative. The result, whether intentional or not, is to convey the impression that the makers and executants of our Palestine policy were objectively, and in a muted British way, partners with the Nazis in the destruction of European Jewry. This impression is a distillation from quotations of Colonial and Foreign Office officials, administrators in Palestine, and Ambassadors in European and Arab capitals. Mr Gilbert does not pause to explain that the Middle Eastern policy they were administering was considered, rightly or wrongly, to be essential for the protection of vital military and diplomatic assets during the greatest crisis in Britain's modern history. Members of the Foreign Service were not paid to love the Jews or the Arabs or any other people (or to hate them either), but to preserve and advance to the best of their ability the national interests as these were seen by the Government of the day.

The point was well made by Sir Maurice Peterson, commenting on the Prime Minister's views in 1943:

> "The question is . . . not whether we owe the Arabs a debt of gratitude, but whether we have important interests centring in the Arab world. The answer must be emphatically that we have; and in particular our oil interests."

Strictly speaking Mr Gilbert does not argue his case at all; he simply assumes that Zionism was a manifestly just cause and that its justice should have overridden other considerations. Even the title of his book, *Exile and Return*, begs a question of substantial importance: to what extent the Jews who have settled in Palestine during the 20th century have in fact any ethnic connection with the Israelites of the Bible. The significance of the conversion to Judaism of the Khazar kingdom in the 8th century was recently discussed by Arthur Koestler in *The Thirteenth Tribe*, a book which does not appear in Mr Gilbert's bibliography. There can be little doubt that the traditional history of the Jewish people has overestimated the part played by the exile and underestimated that of conversion. Indeed most legends of the movement of peoples—as distinct from nomadic tribes—in the dawn of history are manifestly improbable. Peoples settled on the land, as many of the Israelites were, would not easily have been persuaded to move nor probably required by an invader to do so. In general they must have remained, under some form of servitude, and gradually adapted themselves to the language and culture of their new masters. It is quite possible that there are more lineal descendants of the biblical Israelites among the Palestinian fellahin than anywhere else.

NATURALLY THESE SUBVERSIVE speculations were not entertained by the pioneers of Zionism, nor were the historical arguments of the Zionists queried by British Cabinet Ministers in 1917. Exactly what the Cabinet thought they were offering in the Balfour Declaration is still not altogether clear, and Mr Gilbert's treatment of Balfour himself cannot—

[1] *Exile and Return: The Emergence of Jewish Statehood.* By MARTIN GILBERT. Weidenfeld & Nicolson, £7.95.

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General Lucius D. Clay, U.S. Military Governor, European Command, 1947. U.S. Army photograph.

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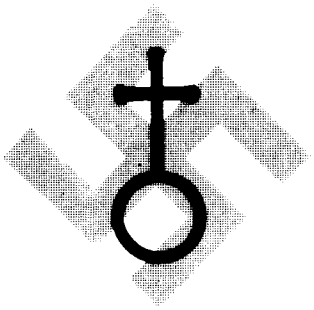

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through no fault of his—be said to make it much clearer. Presenting in Cabinet the case for the Declaration, Balfour said that "it did not *necessarily* involve the *early* establishment of an independent Jewish State" (the emphasis is mine). A little over a year later, writing to and perhaps trying to placate Curzon, he said: "Weizmann has never put forward a claim for the Jewish *Government* of Palestine [Balfour's emphasis]. Such a claim is in my opinion certainly inadmissible." Another 18 months passed, and at a private meeting which included Weizmann both Balfour and Lloyd George agreed that "by the Declaration they had always meant an eventual Jewish State."

Weizmann himself had a clear view of his objective, though the patience and adroitness with which he approached it may conceivably have misled Balfour in 1919 into disclaiming it on his behalf. In his eyes the Jewish people had a just claim to Palestine on grounds not only of their past history but also of their present capability. The Arab-Jewish struggle, the High Commissioner reported him as saying in 1936, was one between the forces of the desert and destruction on one side and the forces of civilisation and building on the other.

A. W. Kayyali's *Palestine: A Modern History*,[2] free as it is from polemics, is a sufficient refutation of this crude dichotomy. It is, despite its title, not so much a history of Palestine as an account of Arab political activity up to 1939 as it was seen and reported by the Palestine Administration and by the numerous Commissions invited to propose solutions for an increasingly insoluble problem. One of the earliest of these, the Haycraft Commission of 1921, sought to disabuse the authorities in London of the view, commonly held and encouraged by Zionist propaganda, that the Arabs consisted of a few agitators and an inert peasant mass: "In a small Moslem centre . . . the people are more politically minded than in a small English country town, and the discussion of politics is their chief, if not their only, intellectual occupation." Mr Kayyali makes no attempt to disguise the weaknesses and divisions of the Arab leadership, and his book is an admirably cool and objective study of an aspect of the Mandate's history which has not previously, so far as I know, been so thoroughly considered.

MICHAEL COHEN HAS TREATED a shorter period, 1936–45, on a somewhat larger scale.[3] Here it is neither the Jews nor the Arabs, but the British, who occupy the centre of the stage. Their purposes and methods are examined with

[2] *Palestine: A Modern History*. By A. W. KAYYALI. Croom Helm. £9.95.

[3] *Palestine: Retreat from the Mandate*. By MICHAEL J. COHEN. Paul Elek. £8.95.

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remarkable perception and judged without prejudice. Even the White Paper of 1939, which caused Mrs Blanche Dugdale to describe Malcolm MacDonald as "so anti-Semitic as to be almost demented", does not disturb his patient historical judgment. Dr Cohen quotes, evidently with understanding if not with approval, the opinion expressed in Cabinet by Neville Chamberlain that

> we are now compelled to consider the Palestine problem mainly from the point of view of its effect on the international situation.... If we must offend one side, let us offend the Jews rather than the Arabs.

His treatment of this episode is the most thorough I have seen, underlining in particular the opinion expressed in a Foreign Office minute that the negativism of the Palestine leaders had caused the independent Arab States to miss the chance of concluding "an agreement between Great Britain and the Arab States which would have been binding on all future Governments."

The divergence of Foreign Office and Colonial Office policies is a recurrent theme in Dr Cohen's narrative, through which he traces the increasingly dominant influence of the former: "It has been a central thesis of this book that Britain's Palestine policy was to an ever-increasing extent a factor of her Middle Eastern policy as a whole." It was a current which Churchill as Prime Minister sought to reverse, packing a Cabinet Committee set up in 1943 to consider "long-term policy for Palestine" with known pro-Zionists. (Anthony Eden, having failed to persuade the Prime Minister to reduce its bias by removing Leopold Amery, observed to his dismayed officials that "it is a comfort to reflect that Mr Amery has never been right on any subject that I can recollect from Palestine to the League of Nations.") Nevertheless Churchill might have got his way and committed Britain once more to the partition of Palestine if he had not called a halt to the preparations for this step when Lord Moyne was assassinated in Cairo by Jewish terrorists who thus, like the Palestine Arab leaders in 1939, did a grave disservice to their own cause.

With the War over, Dr Cohen believes "it would have been inconceivable for any politician who put British interests first to favour the establishment of a Jewish State." It is to be hoped that, with all (or nearly all) the documents for 1948 now available, he will carry the story down to the end of the Mandate. The period calls for scholarship of this high order.

DR COHEN IS AN Israeli, and so is General Herzog. Beyond that they do not have much discernibly in common. The General's book, *Who Stands Accused?*,[4] consists in part of a selection of his speeches in the United Nations, and to that extent is avowedly propagandist. But there is little to distinguish the speeches from the rest of the book in either style or content.

Controversy in the field of human rights is frequently embarrassing because of an uneasy suspicion that the accusers would not, if the roles were reversed, behave very differently from the accused. But when the latter meets all accusations with assertions of his undeviating rectitude—a sense in which General Herzog abounds—he loses this residual moral advantage. The General's patriotic myopia extends to other issues, as in his discussion of the territories occupied by Israel after the war of 1967. He begins by arguing that Jordan, because of the "aggressive character" of her occupation of the West Bank in 1948, could not acquire rights or sovereignty over that territory. Consequently Israel, having driven out the Jordanians, cannot be regarded as an occupying Power to which, for instance, the Geneva Conventions would apply. Moreover, the disabilities incurred by Jordan in 1948 did not devolve upon Israel in 1967 because *her* act of conquest was not "aggressive" but "defensive."

In his counter-attack on Israel's critics the General leaves no stone unturned. He endorses Martin Luther King's dictum that "when people criticise Zionists, they mean Jews." This of course is nonsense. There are many people without a trace of anti-Semitism, and indeed not a few Jews, who regard the Balfour Declaration as a disaster and deplore its consequences.

FOR THE TIME BEING at least, Gamal Abdul Nasser's reputation is in decline. This is in part a reaction to President Sadat's dramatic military and diplomatic achievements, and in part the result of a critical reappraisal by Egyptian writers which was not possible in Nasser's lifetime. It is reflected by P. J. Vatikiotis in *Nasser and His Generation*,[5] a book whose value lies largely in the use he is the first to make of the material which has appeared in Arabic since 1970. What Louis Awad described as the "eighteen-year-long monologue" was over, and hitherto silent critics began to proclaim their assessment of the late President's achievements. The author summarises their judgments on the whole with severity, yet not without recognising the massive weight of Nasser's personality and his deployment of ultimately indefinable gifts of leadership:

> He proved unarguably that he was "a leader of the people", a *zaim*. What he failed to prove was that he was leading them somewhere.

This was perhaps not surprising, since from 1956 onwards leadership itself was his central aim,

[4] *Who Stands Accused? Israel Answers its Critics.* By CHAIM HERZOG. Weidenfeld & Nicolson, £6.50.

[5] *Nasser and his Generation.* By P. J. VATIKIOTIS. Croom Helm, £11.95.

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leadership not of Egypt only but of the entire Arab world.

Nasser became the incarnation of pan-Arabism, which under his banner came nearer than at any other time to having an effective political programme. At the same time it drew him into initiatives which he had not planned and which weakened his only firm power base in Egypt. He did not want either the short-lived union with Syria in 1958 or the involvement in the Yemen which drained Egypt's resources from 1962 to 1967. "I do not act", he used to say by way of defending himself against suspicions of machiavellism, "I react." It was true; it was also a weakness, flowing inevitably from the pursuit of leadership for its own sake.

NO ONE HAS WRITTEN about Nasser more persuasively or with more understanding than Mohamed Heikal, who, in *Sphinx and Commissar*,[6] now looks again at his Presidency and that of his successor in terms of their relationship with the Soviet Union. At various times Mr Heikal has been labelled by foreign observers as both pro-Soviet and pro-American, but there is no reason to doubt his own self-description:

> The only point of view from which I write is that of an Arab, and as an Arab I have always been anxious to see the Arab world achieve a balanced relationship with the Soviet Union. After all, the Soviet Union is one of the two superpowers; it is geographically near the Arabs, and it represents one of the main ideologies which have shaped the world in which we all have to live.

Despite this basically sympathetic approach to the Russians, he confesses that he experienced the difficulty of which Westerners constantly complain in establishing "any real personal relationship with them. The problem in hand could be discussed, but that was all. Beyond that, oratory and an exchange of slogans had to take the place of conversation or argument."

Only Khrushchev emerges as a distinct—indeed disconcerting—personality. On Mr Heikal's first visit to Moscow he lost a cigar to Khrushchev, who denounced it as capitalist, seized it and crushed it in the ashtray. Six years later he astonished Mr Heikal by presenting him with a box of cigars, explaining that since the Cuban revolution they had become "Marxist-Leninist."

The later chapters trace the steps in the estrangement between Egypt and the Soviet Union

[6] *Sphinx and Commissar: The Rise and Fall of Soviet Influence in the Arab World.* By MOHAMED HEIKAL. Collins, £6.95.

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following the accession of President Sadat. The cultivation of closer relations with Saudi Arabia appears to have been the first step, whether Sadat already knew where he was going or simply followed an instinctive appreciation of the importance of a Cairo-Riyadh axis which has since become the most influential of inter-Arab relationships. Next came the counter-coup of May 1971, when Sadat turned the tables on a group of Nasser's inner circle who were plotting to re-establish their power at the President's expense and who had also been closely identified with Nasser's pro-Soviet policy. The imprisonment of Ali Sabri and his fellow-conspirators was therefore interpreted as an anti-Russian move, and the conclusion of an Egypto-Soviet Treaty of Friendship eleven days later has never been satisfactorily explained. Mr Heikal's revelation that it had been proposed by Sadat himself a few weeks earlier does not altogether dispel the mystery.

In any case the Treaty did not prevent the sudden expulsion, in the following year, of the 21,000 Russian military advisers and experts from Egypt. "The decision to expel the Russian experts was taken by President Sadat alone", Mr Heikal says. He appears to sympathise with criticism of the President for taking this step without first using it to extract some advantage from Washington; against this it could be argued that too evident a rapprochement with the Americans at this stage might have cost Egypt the essential air-lift of Russian arms in the war of the following October. It was after this that Kissinger made his first appearance in Cairo. For three hours he talked with Sadat alone. "I believe", Mr Heikal comments, "it was in these three hours that the fate of the Soviet Union in the Middle East was sealed."

Thereafter Sadat committed himself unequivocally to working with the United States. Egypt had two urgent needs: to terminate the Palestine wars if a settlement with Israel could be had on reasonable terms, and to concentrate resources for a long overdue attack on her pressing economic problems. To these tasks the United States had incomparably more to contribute than the Soviet Union.

THE DESTRUCTION of Russian influence in Egypt was one of the two most conspicuous setbacks suffered by external Powers in their effort to maintain or assert influence in the Middle East after the Second World War. The other was the collapse of the Anglo-French expedition to the Suez Canal in 1956. Despite the abnormal and ultimately self-defeating secrecy with which this operation was planned, its origins and course have by now been fairly completely disclosed. *Suez 1956*, Selwyn Lloyd's posthumous memoir,[7] fills a gap however, in the sense that there has hitherto been no detailed account by a British participant extending beyond Anthony Nutting's resignation from the Government a few days before the Anglo-French ultimatum, and no British account of the crucial tripartite meeting with the French and the Israelis at Sèvres. Of this meeting General Dayan has written:

> Britain's Foreign Minister may well have been a friendly man, pleasant, charming, amiable. If so, he showed near genius in concealing these virtues. His manner could not have been more antagonistic. His whole demeanour expressed distaste—for the place, the company and the topic.

I believe this comment showed more insight than its author realised, that the Foreign Secretary's distaste was unfeigned and that he had surrendered his personal judgment to his faith in the Prime Minister's knowledge, experience and wisdom.

His own account of the Sèvres meeting seems unconsciously to support this belief. For, most curiously, Selwyn Lloyd presents evidence which conclusively substantiates the charge of collusion with Israel without apparently realising that he has done so. "We had agreed", he writes, "to a French proposal that if Israel attacked Egypt we would intervene to protect the Canal." But in a letter to his French colleague he drew a fine distinction: "I said that I wished to make it clear that we had not asked Israel to take action. We had merely stated what would be our reactions if certain things happened." These are surely the words of a man trying desperately to reconcile what he had done with principles or political axioms which he was fearful of having violated.

Earlier in October, away from Eden's immediate influence, Selwyn Lloyd had been negotiating in New York with the Egyptian Foreign Minister, together with his French colleague and in the presence of Hammarskjöld. Some progress had been made, and a further meeting planned. There can be little doubt that the Foreign Secretary would have preferred to pursue this course, and it now appears that in doing so he would have had the approval of the General Manager of the Suez Canal Company, M. Jacques Georges-Picot.[8] Critical as he is of the French and British Governments, M. Georges-Picot has no doubt that the Americans, and in the first place Dulles, were primarily responsible for the Suez fiasco. Of Dulles he says that "before 1956 as well as after, he appears to have been haunted by the fear that Russia would penetrate Egypt; his own wavering policy was finally to land her there." It was certainly this fear which deterred him from

[7] *Suez 1956: A Personal Account*. By SELWYN LLOYD. Jonathan Cape, £6.50.

[8] *The Real Suez Crisis: The End of a Great Nineteenth Century Work*. By JACQUES GEORGES PICOT. Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, £7.10.

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giving effective support to the former colonial Powers in the earlier stages of the crisis, and which finally led the United States Government, despite the implications for Israel, to apply the pressure which brought the military intervention to a shuddering halt.

The lesson of Suez—as of the Russian withdrawal from Egypt 16 years later—is that the independence of the Middle Eastern States, despite their intra-regional conflicts and the vulnerability of their petroleum wealth, is protected in the last resort by the rivalry of the superpowers.

The Old & the New

The Changes in China—By MICHAEL YAHUDA

FEW COUNTRIES HAVE contributed more to shaping the configurations of world power in the last 30 years than China. Consider, for example, the global significance of its transformation from close ally to most militant adversary of the Soviet Union. No other country has had such an influence on the ending of the period of bi-polarity and the reshaping of the strategic balance between the United States and the Soviet Union. The adoption of a more active foreign policy, especially in the last year (symbolised by Chairman Hua Kuo-feng's visit to Romania and Yugoslavia, which *inter alia* challenged the idea that these countries were somehow within a legitimate Soviet sphere of influence), has led to a virulent Soviet response.

As China has become more globally engaged, so the Sino-Soviet conflict has been globalised, and most countries find that their foreign policies have been further complicated by this new factor. Britain encountered few problems in Anglo-Soviet relations when agreeing in 1975 to sell China the advanced supersonic Spey jet engine which notionally could be used in an offensive role. Yet the proposed sale of subsonic Harrier jump-jets (whose only conceivable role is defensive in the context of the Sino-Soviet border where the Soviet Union enjoys overwhelming technological military superiority) has attracted hostile comment from Soviet sources and dire warnings that an allegedly "anti-Soviet act" could have repercussions not only on Anglo-Soviet relations but on East-West relations as a whole—and on the SALT negotiations in particular. China bears more heavily upon us than ever before.

Of equal if not greater world-wide importance are domestic developments in China. Less well known, less well understood, it is none the less true that many of the issues at the heart of Chinese politics over the last 30 years are in themselves of universal significance. Moreover, no other country has posed them in this way. In *The Times Literary Supplement* (10 November 1978) Asa Briggs has argued that Mao's attempts to reconcile some of the most difficult conflicts of the modern age—egalitarianism *vs.* industrialism, freedom *vs.* bureaucracy, participation *vs.* order—mean that consideration of Mao and the Chinese revolution "cannot be left entirely to historians who have devoted the whole of their lives to Chinese studies." This is a laudable and welcome viewpoint. It is high time for the widespread ignorance of China, which prevails even among those who might otherwise consider themselves highly educated and moderately well-informed, to be dispelled. It may be argued that this ignorance has been due to the "closed" character of Communist China; but the "closed" character of the Soviet Union has proved no barrier to the main themes of its Communist Party history being regarded as a normal part of the intellectual equipment of an educated person in the West. The history of the Chinese Communist Party seems to be familiar only to specialists, and even the main themes of 20th-century Chinese history are generally unknown, or at best only partially understood. Asa Briggs' putative non-specialist historian would have to turn to the writings of specialists, not only for historical and political details, but also for intellectual frameworks within which to try and make sense of the Chinese experience.

Here further difficulties arise. Though Soviet politics have long been set within a recognised mould, the same cannot be said of China. One of the characteristics of the People's Republic of China (certainly as observed from the outside) has been a recurring tendency to institute thorough-going transformations of existing policies and institutional structures. The attempt to understand these total systemic changes by tracing their origins and development leads to the revision of previously accepted understandings—not only of the immediately preceding period, but even of those intellectual themes and historical experiences of the last 150 years which may be regarded as shaping contemporary issues and the ways in which they are perceived by contemporary Chinese. For example, the development of the Sino-Soviet conflict led to a re-evaluation of all aspects of Sino-Russian relations from the distant past to those

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during the Chinese Revolution (both before and after 1949). This led in its turn to a reconsideration of the mainsprings of China's foreign policy. These considerations were given further impetus by the Sino-American *détente* in the 1970s.

The whole question of what went wrong in Sino-American relations in 1948–49 has now been re-opened (not only in America but, to judge by a recent Peking wall-poster, in China as well) and Sino-American relations of the 1950s and the 1960s are also being re-examined. The "revisionist" historians in this case, unlike those who took sides in the controversy over the origins of the Cold War, may be said to belong to "the establishment." One such recent study is *China Watch*, by Robert G. Sutter,[1] a former analyst with the American Foreign Broadcasts Information Service, who argues that Mao Tse-tung and Chou En-lai (but not all China's leaders) were motivated by balance-of-power considerations, and that America missed significant opportunities to improve relations with China in the mid-1950s.

Changes of this order of magnitude in China's *domestic* affairs (to cite only the two most obvious ones) would include the Great Leap Forward of 1958 and the Cultural Revolution which began in 1965–66. The "Great Leap Forward" led to a re-evaluation of the significance of the Yenan period of the late 1930s and early 1940s in Chinese Communist thinking and, at a deeper level, to a radical reconsideration of the intellectual and social basis of the Chinese Communist movement. On a more universal plane it led to consideration of whether or not there was a "Chinese model of development." What was "unique" to China? What was "transferable"? Was China's modern history *sui generis* or was it somehow "typical"—a model for Third World countries? Was China's Foreign Minister in any sense correct to write in *Izvestia* (in 1959, on the tenth anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic) that "China's yesterday is Africa's today, and China's today is Africa's tomorrow"?

The Cultural Revolution totally transformed Western understanding of the central questions of Chinese politics of the previous seventeen years. Perhaps more importantly, it changed our understanding of the nature of legitimate authority in Communist states. It promised to give birth to a new kind of socialist society. The startling and rapid changes now taking place in China are altering accepted understandings of the Cultural Revolution and raise totally new questions about prevailing orthodoxies, not only those of the thirty years of the People's Republic, but of earlier periods as well. In addition to giving yet another twist to the Chinese formulation of Asa Briggs' universal themes, these developments should lead to a new understanding of the processes of economic development and modernisation themselves.

THE PROBLEM OF identifying intellectual frameworks which will illuminate the changes in China does not derive solely from change within China itself. A very strong case can be made for arguing that a greater problem lies with the perspectives brought to bear from their own domestic environments by Western specialists. Until very recently Western studies of contemporary China bore the mark of the enmity and hostility with which the United States in particular, and Western governments in general, regarded the People's Republic of China. A large part of the published material on China in the 1950s and 1960s could quite properly be described as Cold War scholarship; much of the remaining scholarship was concerned to counteract and argue against such "establishment" views. Despite—perhaps because of—the appeal of certain ideas about China, a great deal of Western writing about China down the ages has, in retrospect, revealed more about the attitudes of the authors than about the country they were ostensibly concerned with.[2] (There is in fact quite a historiography on the subject.) This phenomenon is true not only of the distant past: it is widely recognised as true of contemporary China as well, although there is also a respectable Western tradition of firm scholarship on China which extends into the contemporary era.

As with good history generally, some of the best historians of modern China write within the context of general issues and intellectual concerns. China's modern history illuminates most contemporary issues, from those concerning the Third World (patterns of economic modernisation, dependency, independence, the creation of a modern polity, urban-rural problems, etc.) to the more general ones of revolution and socialism, as well as those singled out by Asa Briggs. The merit of *China from the 1911 Revolution to Liberation*, by Jean Chesneaux and his co-authors,[3] which deals with Chinese history from the fall of the Manchu Dynasty to the foundation of the People's Republic, is that the dynamics of the enormous changes which shook China in those four

[1] *China Watch: Toward Sino-American Reconciliation*. By ROBERT G. SUTTER. John Hopkins University Press, £7.75, $10.95.

[2] Contrast, for example, Voltaire's view of China as a country governed by secular rational principles, worthy as a model by which to remould the *ancien régimes* of Europe, with the views of 19th-century British merchants (the "old China hands") according to whom China was a decrepit place, governed by corruption and venality, which could be saved from itself only by opening it up to Western commerce and enterprise.

[3] *China from the 1911 Revolution to Liberation*. By JEAN CHESNEAUX, FRANÇOISE LE BARBIER and MARIE-CLAIRE BERGERE. Harvester Press, £12.50, paper £5.00.

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decades are explained in a way which combines analysis of what might be called the high politics of the main leaders with acute sensitivity to the changes affecting the peasant masses and other social groups in China. They explain the eventual success of the Chinese Communist Party in terms neither of its political line nor of its political apparatus:

> What really counts, in the end, is that the CCP was able to adapt its own political aims and organised actions to the movements with which it joined forces, but which had come into being outside the CCP and had their own historical roots; primarily the peasant movement, then the national movement, the workers' movement, and the student movement.

Chesneaux and his colleagues have emphasised those factors which serve to explain the victory of the CCP. The role of other political and social forces had by 1949 become "unimportant." Marc Bloch is cited approvingly: "the historian must know 'how to run the film backward'." I must, in fairness, point out that the original French edition of this book was published well before the death of Mao, the fall of the Gang of Four, and the announced end of the Cultural Revolution. For the authors go on to observe:

> the events of 1949 put in the background a question long considered central by Westerners and by those Chinese who went along with them: the question of modernization.

The authors explain that their reference here is to the generation of politicians and intellectuals which, influenced half-a-century earlier by the Japanese example, was convinced that China's future salvation rested on its capacity to modernise along the Western pattern of capitalist enterprise, parliamentary democracy, and intellectual liberalism. Nevertheless, a very short time after those lines were written, the Chinese Revolution took another of its startling turns, and embraced a wholesale rapid modernisation in which the West is increasingly seen as a model, and democracy, legality and human rights have become central features of a remarkable debate.

Chesneaux, himself an avowed Marxist, repudiated the changes in China as a retreat from socialism very soon after the fall of the Gang of Four. His book is intended as an introduction to the forces which shaped the Communist victory in 1949, and therefore prepares the reader for those themes which contributed to developments in the post-1949 period. Yet it does not in any way alert him to the persisting demand for modernisation. At the time the book was written few would have quarrelled with the authors' observation or indeed found it particularly remarkable, and the somewhat different perspectives now called for in examining

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China's modern history do not diminish its value. It remains one of the best introductions to the period, but illustrates how the combination of massive change in China and the raising of new issues about the present and the past changes our perspectives on both and makes some of the previous scholarship seem dated.

It would be misleading to imply that every significant change necessitates a totally new attempt to come to terms with China. Western knowledge of Chinese modern history, and of the social, economic and political processes of the People's Republic—or rather the knowledge of those who specialise on China—is deeper and more extensive than ever before. It suffers to a large extent from having been formulated at one, indeed many, removes from the "real" China. But there is one very welcome spin-off from China's new course: many of the barriers which have existed between Chinese and Westerners (including most of those who have visited China over the years) are in the process of being removed.

WELL BEFORE THE November wall-poster campaign for democracy and legality began, Amnesty International had prepared a timely, lucid and (as far as I can judge) accurate report[4] on one aspect of the human rights question in China—political imprisonment. It did so on the basis of careful use of such official documentation as is available from the People's Republic, unofficial material (e.g. wall-posters whose contents have become known in the West), interviews with refugees, and secondary sources produced by Western specialists on Chinese law and by others. The picture it paints is less than edifying: it is one of arbitrary persecution of people through the abuse of vaguely worded laws—and indeed, during the Cultural Revolution the abandonment of even those scant legal provisions. What is perhaps most disturbing is Amnesty's documentation of the openly sanctioned abuse of human rights in the 1950s even within the terms laid down in the legal codes, at a time when legal norms were prevalent to a greater degree than in any other period of the People's Republic. But a remarkable debate approved from above is currently taking place in China on precisely these issues. The Amnesty Report is in many ways a vindication of Western scholarship on China, and shows what can be gleaned from the limited material available to the outside world.

Quite properly, the Report notes time and time again that the abuse of human rights has been greatest during periods of mass movements, when established institutional procedures are temporarily set aside. Yet it was precisely through such movements, as the Chesneaux book demonstrates, that the CCP attuned itself to the demands of social forces in China, of which the most important was the peasantry. The peasants in turn developed patterns of greater participation in determining decisions affecting their lives and livelihood, and in many ways these experiences helped to create the need and pave the way for the "April 5th Movement" of 1976, when hundreds of thousands sought to pay homage to the late Premier Chou En-lai and thereby registered their protest against the so-called "radicals", "The Gang of Four." The past experience of political movements is now shaping the campaign for legality and greater democracy.

The Amnesty Report takes it for granted (indeed the point is not discussed) that there can be no relativism on this aspect of the human rights question—and this is entirely laudable. None the less it is important to appreciate the significance of the role of law in the Chinese historical experience. Historically, in China, good government was perceived as government by good men rather than as government by good laws. Law was largely an instrument for orderly government, rather than for limiting the powers of those who governed. China's Communist leaders too have perceived the law not as a device by which citizens can limit their powers, but as an instrument for ensuring institutional regularity and order. And now, in the current campaign, law and legality are advocated not as ends in themselves but as necessary components of the drive for modernisation. Hence citizens should be fully aware of their rights and rational rules should predominate over arbitrary or tyrannical local leaders.

HOW CAN WE MAKE SENSE of the startling changes currently taking place in China? Clearly, considerable caution is required. There are those who consider that a kind of Thermidor has set in; that the new leadership has turned away from socialism and settled upon a determined course of modernisation designed to transform China into a strong and prosperous state by the end of the century. After all, is it not the Western—some would say, the universal—experience of all revolutions that they come to an end? (This in turn raises the question as to how far it is possible to generalise universally on the basis of the historical experience of a particular country or culture.) It is important to return to China's historical experiences. Although it would be foolhardy to suggest at this stage a historical perspective in the sense of an intellectual framework within which to understand the broad patterns of the changes in China, it is clearly possible to pose questions which may help to identify the main issues.

[4] *Political Imprisonment in the People's Republic of China.* Amnesty International Publications (British Section, Tower House, 8-14 Southampton Street, London W.C.2.), £2, plus 22p postage.

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The history of the People's Republic suggests a zig-zag pattern of development in which, in dialectical fashion, a particular course of action is embraced to such an extreme that it leads to countervailing tendencies: one course is replaced by a totally different one. To cite one example, in the first part of the 1950s China's leaders, with Mao in the van, unleashed an enormous thorough-going campaign of learning from the Soviet Union. China's state and party institutions, its industry, educational system, and so on were copied wholesale. By the late 1950s this was largely abandoned in favour of a "Chinese Way." Now that Chinese Way is being repudiated. This alternating pattern can be found in other smaller issues; in fact there is hardly one single aspect of Chinese social and political life of which this is not true.

Can the process have ended? Was it true, as some suggest, that such changes emanated from Mao alone? If so, what was it that gave Mao such dominance? His relationship to his colleagues was very different from Stalin's. Far from exercising tyranny over them, he often engaged in argument—and he did not always get his own way. Indeed in the early 1960s he was deprived of considerable power, and his awareness of waning authority played a big part in his decision to initiate the Cultural Revolution. Roger Howard, in *Mao Tse-tung and the Chinese People*,[5] identifies the source of Mao's power as derived to a great extent from his capacity to sense and give a lead to the aspirations of the bulk of the Chinese people—especially the peasantry. But, interestingly, some of the recent wall-posters in Peking have challenged precisely this kind of view, and maintain that, particularly in his latter years, Mao became rather isolated from the people; that his was a kind of "feudal dictatorship." Nevertheless there is considerable evidence to support Howard's view, especially until the 1970s.

Consideration of Mao's role and the extent of his power leads one to ask what social and political forces contributed to the dynamics of these changes. For further light one must ask new questions of earlier periods.

Though Chesneaux's book may have erred in not granting continuing significance to the theme of modernisation, it certainly gives full play to two other themes which have helped to shape modern Chinese history: nationalism, and revolution and/or socialism. It would be rash to assume that egalitarian concerns and the claims for greater social justice associated with revolution and socialism have now been swept away. The current drive for modernisation may be popular—and is possibly accorded a higher priority than egalitarian concerns, which have been discredited by the ultra-

[5] *Mao Tse-tung and the Chinese People*. By ROGER HOWARD. Allen & Unwin, £6.95.

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leftist rhetoric of the preceding years—but there are grounds for believing that this will not always be so. Rapid modernisation creates new social strata; it tends to benefit certain regions and social groups more than others. In other words, it helps to create new grounds for social discontent. At the same time there obviously still are political forces in China which are unhappy with some of the current criticism of Mao and his policies. Moreover, the bulk of China's senior leaders are old revolutionaries themselves, firmly entrenched in socialist views—though of a different kind to those prevalent in the Cultural Revolution period.

The isolationist impulses of the Maoist doctrine of self-reliance are being abandoned while China seeks to open the country to modern technology from the West and indeed seeks a kind of alliance with the Western countries against what is seen as Soviet expansionism. But national revolutionary impulses still inform China's foreign policy. She is firmly wedded to a highly developed concept of independence as a member of the Third World which is seeking to establish a new kind of world order. Support for revolutionary movements in countries in South-east Asia is still considered of sufficient importance to risk embarrassing relations with foreign governments when friendly relations with them have never been as important as they are now. Whatever may have changed in China's relationship with the outside world, her leaders have not abandoned their capacity to act autonomously, either within China or beyond its frontiers. Asa Briggs' implied invitation to non-China specialists to address themselves to the universal issues of the fresh developments in China could not have been better timed. Specialists from all disciplines are visiting the country in ever-increasing numbers; many of the barriers to open communication between Chinese and foreigners have been removed, and there are opportunities for exploring all kinds of interesting questions. If they are to do more than simply provide interesting material for China specialists to include in their studies, non-China specialists should first seek to familiarise themselves with Chinese history. Although Western studies of China may rapidly become out of date, they can help to provide or at least shape relevant questions. And then we may have an adequate perspective within which to generalise about this fascinating country.

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The Vulture's Sense of Death

On Sebastian Haffner's "Hitler"—By GOLO MANN

THIS IS AN intelligent, wholly original and very enlightening book;[1] and I am grateful for its appearance despite many reservations. Grateful, for one thing, that it is *not* yet another Hitler biography, and, as Haffner sees it, for several reasons.

The first reason is external: we have got enough thousand-page accounts of Hitler (which one can refer to without having to repeat everything that is so easy to find and establish).

The second is intrinsic. Adolf Hitler is not a suitable subject for a biography in the traditional style. His private life has no real value for us, is uninteresting, tells us nothing. Only the story of his youth is in itself relevant: how somebody acquires a *Weltanschauung* and such an extreme one; how somebody prepares to become an extremist politician.

From the moment his political life begins in earnest, let's say after 1930—of course there is a long prelude—Hitler's life becomes a component of the history of our time, unfortunately a major component. It is here that one sees the fault in the structure of Joachim Fest's *Hitler*. He, too, wanted to write largely biography when 99.9% of the time he should have been writing history (which is why, for example, Hitler's activities in Poland found no place in his book).

Sebastian Haffner locates Hitler in comparatively very few pages. This means his book becomes an essay, an investigation, an analysis. Hitler's life is dealt with briefly and concisely in a first chapter of 27 pages. Why was Hitler so close (on several occasions) to "putting an end to it all in five minutes with a revolver", so that his actual end seemed a natural consequence to the people around him? Because his life had been completely one with his politics since the "decision" of 1919. All or Nothing. If he failed in the political sphere, in the attempt to gain Everything, there remained only self-destruction. There is here neither drama nor epic—neither comedy nor grand opera nor tragedy—all of which permeated Napoleon's life and have been presented in literature many times.

Haffner emphasises the unprecedented nature of the phenomenon: to have caused so much turmoil in world history—although, to be sure, ultimately failing to achieve anything—without inspiring any interest, sympathy, respect or even hatred for himself, only disgust. What is astonishing is not the man, but what he caused.

Was *allowed* to cause. Haffner's essay is divided into seven chapters, entitled: "Life, Achievements, Successes, Misjudgments, Mistakes, Crimes, Betrayal." Only two of these nouns are really strong words, "Betrayal" and "Crimes." The others belong to normal discourse: we all live, each of us achieves something in his own particular area, has successes, commits errors of judgment, makes mistakes.

Even "Crimes" and "Betrayal" do not have that much effect on us—fraudulent bankruptcy is both a crime and a betrayal (of the creditors). But far be it from me to complain to Haffner about the weakness of these titles. Our vocabulary will never stretch to what Master Adolf did and was.

HAFFNER'S LANGUAGE flows calmly and coolly. It is assumed in advance that the author is horrified by what he is writing and remembering, and that the reader will be horrified when he reads it. Perhaps this style is the most suitable approach, even for didactic purposes. By allowing and conceding everything to his monster that can possibly be granted, the author creates the impression that he is striving for the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. And it makes condemnations such as this one all the more convincing:

> Hitler had countless harmless people killed for no military or political purpose, but merely for his private gratification. In this he does not belong together with Alexander or Napoleon, but rather with the Frauenmörder Kürten and the child-killer Haarmann, only with the difference that what they did by hand, he did by mass production, so that his victims are numbered, not in their dozens or hundreds, but in their millions. He was also quite simply a mass-murderer. Using this word in its precise criminological sense. . . .

[1] *Anmerkungen zu Hitler*. By SEBASTIAN HAFFNER. Kindler Verlag, DM 14.80.

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I will come back to the "also" in the penultimate sentence later. There is incidentally another argument here against a Hitler biography of the traditional sort. Of what earthly use is it writing the biography of a mass-murderer? How he spent his evenings, what music he enjoyed, whether he preferred drinking Bordeaux or champagne, none of this is of interest, it is simply not relevant.

Just as a distinction is made between "misjudgments" and "mistakes", so one is made between "achievements" and "successes." By "achievements" is meant that which the monster brought about through his own talents, or encouraged, made possible, influenced decisively—"model of will-power, energy, and dynamism" that he was.

The best example here is offered by the elimination of unemployment in 1933, the transformation of it into a shortage of labourers within four years. His doing (at least indirectly). Achievements are drawn essentially from the "good" Hitler years, 1934 to 1937: work for all; reasonable prosperity; the spectre of an SA-revolution banished, still a little terror, but no longer uncontrolled and "wild"; triumphant advances in foreign policy peacefully gained; the Olympic Games in Berlin.

In these years Hitler converted a large proportion of the Germans who had still been voting against him in March 1933, workers as well as members of the middle classes. According to the author it took much guile and strength of character to remain an opponent at that time. If this were really the case, it would imply that I possessed both, which I doubt. Admittedly, I was outside Germany, and it was easier for me to see through the formidable fog of "achievements." And incidentally, I will confess that even I was afraid at times that the beast could be proved right, could securely establish his régime, and make the whole of Europe his vassal—without a fight.

I READ an advance draft of the "Achievements" chapter and was irritated by it, although everything, nearly everything, in it seemed irréfutable. My worry was: isn't this turning into a kind of apology? Isn't Haffner missing the heart of the matter? . . . But he did not miss it. When he makes a division, setting achievements in one chapter, crimes in another, he is careful at the end of each chapter to establish the connection to the next one, so that the positive points he has just dealt with are placed in another, truer light. The redeemer was not interested in the "economic miracle" as an end in itself. It was much more a question of getting his Germans in condition for quite different long-established aims: which meant they must be working and fairly contented.

The author's thesis is: Hitler always owed his successes to the weakness, blindness, and inconsistency of his opponents (or of those who should have been his opponents); to the decay of the Weimar Republic in its last years; then to the short-sightedness and demoralised state of the rest of Europe, especially of the political leadership of France. His talent was merely to get the measure of such opponents, to topple what was already falling, to kill what was already dying—a useful talent, but, as Haffner puts it, "resembling not so much the eagle's eye as the vulture's sense of death (*weniger dem Blick des Adlers als der Witterung des Geiers*)." Very true. Anyone who experienced those unhappy years in France will still remember them with a shudder after more than forty years. It was not difficult to get the measure of such opponents, and the monster got it early.

Haffner divides Hitler's political life into three periods: total lack of success till 1930; unqualified success until 1941; then again a total lack of success till the end. These changes of fortune can in no way be explained by any changes in his own character. He remained exactly the same. The crucial factor was the amount of resistance that he met: an intact German Republic until 1930, after that a dissolving one; a policy of "appeasement" from the West until 1939, then a declaration of war followed by no immediate action; then after 1941 three opponents who were as determined as Hitler himself, who were a match for him and who fought him with his own weapons. And thus he was con-

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signed to the abyss of nothingness, long before he elected to commit suicide.

A DECEIVER, successful as long as the people allowed themselves to be deceived. Was it really that simple? I am afraid so, yes. The historian who, in the human actions he is studying, looks for more intelligent motives than they actually contain only makes himself look stupid. This historian is not a stupid one.

The last four chapters are very closely related and form, together with the first, the main body of the book. "Mistakes": that means "Hitler's Philosophy" or *Weltanschauung*. Here Haffner shows that the man held convictions (or was held by them) and that from them a programme was developed; so then he was not just the Nihilistic Opportunist that Hermann Rauschning described. Race and selective breeding: Nation and Community; War as the natural, most appropriate condition of man; peace as a temporary artificiality; the innate struggle of peoples for supremacy in the world; *Lebensraum* as a special mission entrusted to the Germans which became blended with the notion of world hegemony—convictions that he picked up early and which already at the beginning anticipated the unhappy ending.

His paranoiac hatred of the Jews stands alongside these convictions, but also above them, not really conforming to the rest, even in practical terms. Which is why it belongs in the "Mistakes" chapter. Firstly, Germany's Jews were very useful patriots, useful especially in scientific fields including nuclear physics; and they would have gladly remained so if they had been allowed to; secondly, Jewry in general, especially American Jewry, had always been kindly disposed to the German nation, a helpful role that it then had to give up playing—not to mention the fact that the extermination of the Jews occupied many SS divisions and a good deal of transport that could have been used more purposefully in the war.

So hatred of the Jews was a political error of judgment, the extermination of the Jews a military mistake. . . . Here we are on the borderline where Haffner's method, approach, assessment and classification, despite all his relevant insights, give me cause for doubt.

CAN ONE STILL CALL such lunatic murder, realised on such an incredible scale, a "mistake" arising from "misjudgments" and leading to "crimes"? Does this kind of analysis make sense? Madness is madness, deviltry deviltry, the worst thing a man, a man from our civilisation at that, has ever done to his fellow human beings, Poles or Jews or Russians, the worst thing; there is no point in making distinctions here. Hitler was not a highly gifted politician who just happened to be a mass-murderer. He was latently and by disposition a mass-murderer from the beginning. The unprecedented coincidence was that he possessed energy, cunning, talent for organisation and oratorical fascination in sufficient measure to acquire enough power to realise his dreams.

To approach this human catastrophe, do we not also need the concepts of good and evil, *Gut und Böse*, which do not appear in Haffner's book, and also the concept of the irrational which he hardly ever mentions?

Errors of judgment, mistakes, can happen only to someone who is trying to do something reasonable and goes wrong in doing it. Even crimes can be committed only by someone who is distinct from his crime and knows it, not by someone who is simply a criminal, root and branch. Of course, notions like these do appear in the book; Hitler, we read, made mistakes because they were in him. Agreed; only I would like to see it expressed more strongly. And too often Haffner tries to find a rational core in the completely irrational.

An example. Why, he asks, did Hitler crown his list of mistakes on 11 December 1941 by declaring war on the United States and in the process doing President Roosevelt the greatest favour he could have wished for? Roosevelt would never have been able to make his little half-war against Germany

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into a total one without the *Staatsakt* with which Hitler, in his phrase, "gave the American Minister his marching orders." Why? Haffner: It was an act of desperation. According to Haffner, since the successful beginning of the Russian winter offensive, Hitler had known that the War could no longer be won. All or Nothing. But why then offer Roosevelt what he had been asking for (all those calculated provocations)? Why the renunciation of the last vestiges of diplomacy when, ultimately, certain defeat beckoned? Even if one of his cherished ambitions, world supremacy, could no longer be fulfilled, there was another, older ambition that could be—the completion of the "extermination of the vermin (*Vertilgung des Ungeziefers*)." It could only be fulfilled once he reached the stage where he no longer cared what happened to the Anglo-Saxon world. If the German Nation was to be destroyed—in itself no loss in Hitler's eyes—then at least European Jewry should be destroyed along with it and the War prolonged until the ovens of Auschwitz had nothing left to burn.

The Russian counter-offensive, the declaration of war on America, the ordering of the "Final Solution" form a coherent policy. If, despite the blackest prospects for the future, Hitler was in such cheerful mood and so garrulous in the years '42–'45, it was for this reason. He knew that the freight-trains were still running and the gas was still on. In the end he and his *deutsches Volk* would have to face the music, but his cherished life's work would by that time be done. . . .

I DO NOT DOUBT that knowledge of this left him in high spirits. But I do doubt that the decision of 11 December 1941 was as clear-cut as Haffner suggests. It seems more probable that he took the declaration of war on America less seriously. What he knew about America was what he had seen in the film *Gone with the Wind*; he considered it to be just as degenerate and "corrupted by Jewishness (*verjudet*)" as, half a year previously, he had believed Russia to be. In addition, Roosevelt had already done for England all that was in his power; now, with Japan threatening him, he wouldn't be able to do much more. Why not allow himself the joke of a declaration of war, and send packing the last American diplomats, journalists and irritating eye-witnesses?

Even this "explanation" may be contestable; but hardly as contestable as Haffner's. I long ago gave up believing that there is an "explanation" for everything in history, especially in this chapter of history.

THE MONSTER had made up his mind that a "9th of November 1918" should not be allowed to happen again. And how much resulted from that decision alone! But the first man who accepted the lie of the "stab in the back (*Dolchstoss*)" was Adolf Hitler. Along with his hatred of the Jews, it remained the one thing his black soul believed in seriously. One can explain the whole monstrous adventure of his life from his vow that there should never be another 9th of November 1918: one can explain the Second World War.

Although I might agree with Haffner on this point, I still don't think the other sum is correct—that Hitler gave up the War for lost in December 1941. Which would have been more or less the same as conceding the first Great War after the Battle of the Marne in 1914. Anyone who even thought this at that time would have been sentenced to death.

Throughout the following years, plans were laid, the realisation of which assumed another turn in fortunes, an ultimate victory: the splendid reconstruction of Germany's cities, and the execution of the traitor Rudolf Hess. Euphoria and idolatry had not lost their power over these people to the extent that Haffner assumes. He mentions the sudden rush of energy after August 1944, intense even for Hitler; the arrest of 5,000 potential political opponents in Germany (among them Konrad Adenauer); the whipping-up of the people into a *levée en masse*; the Ardennes offensive. Now the moment had come to prevent a 9th of November

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1918. With what aim? With the aim, of course, of winning in 1945 or 1947 the War that they could have won in 1919 or 1920 if the "stab in the back" from the Marxists and Jews had not happened.

When it was that Hitler gave up this insane dream, I don't know either. I think it was very late on, in the Berlin bunker when he said: "*Es hat keinen Sinn mehr* (There's no sense any more)." Shortly before this he had been watching for the outbreak of open conflict between the Russians and the Anglo-Saxon world and had let it be known that with his usual inspiration he would ally himself to one of the two sides, it did not really matter which.

He drew new confidence from the failure of the attempt on his life of 20 July 1944: "The Almighty"—which for him meant the same thing as Fate (*Schicksal*)—would certainly have liquidated him, if He or It did not want him preserved for the ultimate and highest purpose. The verb "liquidate", *auslöschen*, is characteristic; it is the same word that Hitler once used for the extermination of the Jews. He saw himself as the instrument of the Almighty and also as the Almighty himself.

David Irving's assertion that Hitler did not order—did not want—and did not even know—about the extermination of the Jews is thoroughly refuted by Haffner. The cool refutation is more than Irving deserves.

HAFFNER'S THEORY that Hitler with his rigid and utopian programme actually belonged to the ranks of the "Left", not to the conservatives who had always been simply modest and pragmatic men without great plans for the future, is very clever. Clever, but no more than that. This Hitler phenomenon, *sui generis*, was neither of the Left nor of the Right. This man is not to be comprehended in conventional terms, nor even in unconventional ones. That is why Haffner is right when he takes pains to point out the deep differences between Nazism and Mussolini's Fascism. (Conclusion: One should no longer use the word "Fascism" for Hitler or for any other dictators or semi-dictators of our time.)

The book in general bristles with such relevant classifications or non-classifications. For example: Whatever Hitler was, he was not "a statesman", since he had absolutely no idea about matters of state. He did not give his Third Reich any kind of constitution, did not bother about regulating the dispensation of state offices, did not even appoint his successor; so that he would have left chaos behind him if he had died at the peak of his "peaceful" achievements in 1938.

Nor did he conclude any peace treaties after his victories, especially not with France in 1940. Because of this his War aims were literally boundless; there would have been no end. The internal refusal of basic laws, the external refusal of treaties was connected with his reluctance to bind himself in any way, and this, again, with his self-idolatory. Artists and gods must be free of all ties.

HAFFNER'S "OBSERVATIONS ON HITLER" should be read and discussed in all German, all European schools, and they are perfectly suitable for this: clear, informative, and provocative. But for this purpose, a further, concentrated, concluding chapter should have been added. Why? Because the argument in the single chapters often leads to the point where it must end in Hitler's favour or seem to end this way, only then to turn about face.

He saw many things correctly or half-correctly—if only he had not exaggerated everything in such lunatic fashion. He could have been a good European, could have united Europe constructively in 1938, and then again in 1940 . . . if he had not been Hitler. But he was, and had he not been, then he would never have got into the position in which a different person might have created a freely united Europe. Hitler himself was the very last person to do this. Just *who* he was should be shown once more, conclusively. At the end of the day no young European should go home with any doubt in his mind.

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EAST & WEST

An Interview

Zinoviev's Paradoxes

YOU OCCUPY *a special place amongst the dissidents—as a philosopher who writes political satires in which the most contradictory points of view find expression. Are you intentionally broadening the spectrum of "dialectical thinking" in order to lend your analysis of Soviet social conditions a greater degree of objectivity?*

ZINOVIEV: The life of a nation, the life of a single person, and even the attitudes of people towards their own lives—these surely are extremely complicated and contradictory processes. One can go further and say that even a single person can, in different situations, express himself in quite different and often contradictory ways; and this not necessarily because of the lack of fixed personal principles. Good ideas are not always expressed by good men, bad ideas not always by bad men.

ALEXANDER ZINOVIEV, *a world-famous Russian logician and professor of philosophy in Moscow, lost his academic title and teaching post after releasing his monumental, satirical novel "Yawning Heights" for publication in the West. He has recently taken part in the 16th World Congress of Philosophy in Dusseldorf as a member of the Soviet delegation. The invitation had been extended to him before he fell into disfavour. Zinoviev, who received permission from the Soviet authorities to spend a year in the West, was to conduct a seminar on logic at the University of Munich in the winter term 1978–79. During the Congress of Philosophy (in October) the announcement was made in Moscow that Brezhnev had just signed a special Soviet law depriving him officially of his citizenship and thus condemning him to permanent exile.*

This interview was conducted by HELEN VON SSACHNO *who contributed an account of Zinoviev's work to the May 1977* ENCOUNTER, *"Zinoviev's Masterpiece—News from Nowhere in Ibansk."*

As a writer it is important for me to formulate ideas. What these ideas are, and who expresses them, depends on the circumstances. But the following factors must be taken into account. What does the person know about his society, and what does he think about it? What are his emotional responses to the circumstances of his own life: his subjective wishes and ideas? What objective effect do they have on other people? Total agreement of all these factors is impossible. For example, if someone says "*the Government is stable*", that does not necessarily mean he is a supporter of the government; and similarly one cannot automatically assume that someone who maintains the opposite is an opponent. I could continue with many other examples of this kind. But Soviet society will always remain a mystery to those who ignore this paradox. That is why I opted for the scientific mode of thought.

—In your book called "Radiant Future" you say that the real problems of a social system, in this case Russian Communism, only begin once that society has become relatively stable. What did you mean?

ZINOVIEV: Very briefly, one can say that in the development of every society one must distinguish between two different stages: the stage in which a society has to meet extreme challenges (such as war, famine, revolutions, natural disasters, epidemics and so on) and the stage of relative stability. In order to understand why and how a society copes with this first testing stage, one must first know the laws which govern the society in times of relative stability, because this latter stage is the normal one. Up until twenty years ago the Soviet people were essentially occupied with combating difficulties of the first kind. Since then Soviet society has been ticking over more or less normally. The standard of living that people enjoy today is the normal standard of living for this type of society. Not surprisingly, then, over these years a normal kind of opposition for this type of society has developed.

—In your books you repeatedly talk of "the period of liberalisation" as being over. What does this mean for the future?

ZINOVIEV: The "liberal period" is a relative concept. It refers to the Khrushchev era and to the first years of the Brezhnev government. In the past, if one compared these years with those that preceded them one could actually speak of liberalisation and even cherish a few illusions about it. Now these illusions have been punctured, and it is time for a more sober assessment. Today one can no longer speak of "liberalism", but only of a stabilised middle position. This means that before we can speak of the

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process of liberalisation *continuing*, further steps must be taken in this direction. But neither those in power nor the society as a whole are capable of taking them.

—In your books there are fictitious characters who represent certain schools of thought. More often, characters appear behind whose pseudonyms one can easily identify historical or contemporary personalities. How intentional was all this?

ZINOVIEV: It worries me a little that my readers try so hard to decipher my literary characters. Of course, when I conceived them, I drew heavily on certain models, historical figures for example. But that happened less often than critics think, and I definitely did not want to make historical caricatures out of them. Even the "*Master of the House*" is not a stereotype Stalin, and the "*Seeker after Truth*" is not only Solzhenitsyn; the "*Dauber*" is not Neizvestny, and the "*Pharisee*" really is not Sinyavsky, whom I had not even read at the time I wrote my book. This compulsion to decipher everything has, however, its good side. Many Russians think they recognise themselves in this-or-that character, which suggests that the characterisation was fairly successful because it contains not only generalised personality traits, but specific ones as well.

—Why are women never presented as thinking beings in your books, although, for example, they play a significant role in the dissident movement itself?

ZINOVIEV: It's true that women do play a huge role in the dissident movement. Without them, there would be no movement. The real reason why I have not considered this aspect in my books is because one cannot discuss everything at the same time. Primarily I am interested in the sociological laws which govern the lives of both men and women. But I will have something to say on this subject in my future books. If anyone is able to effect ethical changes in Russia, it is the women.

—The concept of ideology plays a large part in your work. Since Marxism is not a science for you, but an ideology, what meaning does this ideology have in Soviet society today?

ZINOVIEV: Marxist ideology is, on the whole, adequately suited to Soviet society. It is "comfortable" for the majority of the population because it is so easy to adapt. In a short time even the most stolid Soviet citizen can learn to manipulate Marxist phraseology so skilfully that in the end it would be difficult to tell the difference between him and a classical Marxist. Over and above this, it teaches people how they can manage to live in Soviet society without coming into conflict with this society. It changes into an instrument of repression only if a person tries to develop his creative faculties, and then it is a straitjacket used against any kind of artistic independence.

—Would the dissident movement, as many believe, be condemned to extinction without the support of the West, or has it already become so important historically that its survival is ensured?

ZINOVIEV: Of course the West gives the dissident movement very tangible spiritual support. But it would be wrong to believe that this movement has been imported from the West. It is the product of the inner life of the country. Even if the West were to be "closed" for Soviet citizens, it would continue to exist, though in another form. One can say for certain that if this were to happen, then secret and even extremist movements and organisations would grow up which are kept in check today only by the constant attempts of the dissidents to have their movement legalised.

—There is a lot of talk here in the West about Samizdat. *How is it that such a thing still exists today? Is it because those in power, for whatever reasons they may have, silently tolerate it, or because they are not in a position to put a stop to it?*

ZINOVIEV: The phenomenon of *Samizdat* proves that powerful strains of opposition have developed among the population and that a considerable number of people actively show their solidarity with this opposition. In addition, there are special historical reasons.

1. The unsettlement of the régime, to a certain extent, after the exposure of Stalinism.

2. The extension of Western contacts and the increasing influence of the West on the inner life of the country. For literally millions of Soviet citizens, life would be unthinkable today without radio broadcasts from the West.

3. The reluctance of the privileged classes and also of certain leading political circles to return to Stalinism. The phenomenon of liberalisation, and, in a sense, the existence of *Samizdat* too, is an inevitable by-product of this type of "*privilegentzia*."

—In the 1940s the notorious "Campaign against Cosmopolitanism" took place with its openly anti-Semitic slant. Are the present repressive measures and trials—against the members of the "Helsinki group", for example—of a similar nature?

ZINOVIEV: From a sociological point of view, one cannot compare the two phenomena. The campaign in the '40s was nothing less than an

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attempt to carry over the Stalinist mass purges of the pre-War period into the post-1945 period. Persecution of the dissidents belongs to the post-Stalinist period. But there are indeed points of comparison. One of them is the phenomenon of anti-Semitism. In my opinion this anti-Semitism finds a resonance in the population; but I also believe that it is encouraged from above. It is made all the more easy by the fact that a high percentage of the dissidents are of Jewish origin.

—In your works you allude to possible differences between you and certain groups of dissidents in the West. What did you mean?

ZINOVIEV: I must resist the idea that my opinions can be identified with those of my literary characters. I am trying to look at the problems of society from all sides by allowing the most diverse opinions to be expressed, without identifying myself completely with any one of them. My own opinions are reflected in all the characters, both the positive and the negative ones.

—You think that Solzhenitsyn (although you disagree with his political views) is the most prominent figure amongst the dissidents. For you he is a kind of symbol. A symbol of or for what?

ZINOVIEV: Solzhenitsyn is an unprecedented phenomenon. For me he is the scourge of God for the crime of Stalinism. I think he is the most important figure to appear in the intellectual life of Soviet Society since the end of the War.

—What are you working on at the moment? What plans do you have?

ZINOVIEV: A few years ago I wrote a short book which will soon appear as a kind of sequel to *Yawning Heights*. In 1977 I finished another book about the problems of religion, morality, ideology, etc., and I am preparing it for publication. The first book has similarities with *Yawning Heights*, the second is entirely different. By that I mean that I am experimenting with a genre I have invented for myself, or so it seems to me.

—As a member of the Soviet delegation you were nominated to be one of the speakers at the recent World Congress of Philosophy in Dusseldorf. How did this invitation come about, and how did your Soviet colleagues behave towards you?

ZINOVIEV: I was invited to the Congress before my book *Yawning Heights* had appeared in the West. I am a Soviet citizen. The Soviet philosophers reacted to this situation in the only way they could react: they took no notice of me, and I took no notice of them. At the Congress itself I was introduced by Professor Bochenski as "the logician from Munich." Nobody seemed to see anything strange in that—except me.

Bamboo

Beneath this lawn somewhere
the bamboo rhizome works.
By the morning there will be
a three-inch spike
where we usually sit.

Splinters under the fingernails,
a laser at the crotch;
when the whole jaw swells
the dentist taps each note to find
one key that screams the tortured chord.

Digging out a dark wound
I find a complicated root.
By the pains of tying ropes
and slamming shut the kitchen door
a particular agony is brought to light.

William Peskett

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POINTS OF THE COMPASS

Italian Notebook

By Luigi Barzini

Happy & Unhappy

IN ONE of those long interviews by George Urban (many of which have appeared in these pages), Rosario Romeo, the Italian historian, recently put down some of his very pronounced opinions on the situation in Italy. An excerpt has also been published on the Op-Ed page of the *New York Times*, and in the Paris *International Herald Tribune*.

This concerns me because, at a certain point, Urban brings me in to support his own unjustifiably optimistic, Panglossian views. Rosario Romeo deals with these firmly, and therefore seems to prove me wrong as well. I should like, if I may, to show that I do not come into it at all, that Urban seems to remember things I never said, either in writing or in conversation (on the occasions he interviewed me, not because I can be really included among his élite of eminent thinkers but simply because the circumstances of my life have meant that I speak fluent English).

Urban says: "Perhaps I have been wrongly influenced by Luigi Barzini's opinion that the Italians' basic good nature and sense of the art of living would soften the harshness, or anyway lessen the extremism, of any political party."

Romeo answers vigorously that ours has always been a violent country, that some of the most famous assassins of history have been Italians, even imported by foreigners for their talent; that today there are towns and whole regions of Italy in which murder is an everyday occurrence. And he mentions assassinations past and present, criminal and political. "There is still a determined minority today", he concludes, "waiting in the wings to exploit the first disturbance of our balance, political, economic and social. . . ."

I do not remember ever having praised the advantages of the Italians' "basic good nature" and opportunism. At the most, I may have emphasised our corrosive, anarchical, flexible capabilities, which means that in our country even the most tyrannical régimes cannot work, although they may preserve, indeed strengthen, the faults of tyranny, and inevitably drag the country to disaster. Nor do I think I have ever written such views. Possibly Urban thinks he read them in my book *The Italians*, which had a rather wide distribution in the English-speaking world.

I should like to quote a passage from the book (published in 1964, and written in the four previous years).[1] On pp. 107-8, for instance, I say:

> Italians first of all fear sudden and violent death. The vigorous passions of a turbulent and restless people are always ready to flare up unexpectedly like hot coals under the ashes. Italy is a bloodstained country. Almost every day of the year jealous husbands kill their adulterous wives and their lovers; about as many wives kill their adulterous husbands and their mistresses; fathers or older brothers kill the seducers of defenceless and guileless virgins; virgins kill the men trying to rape them; desperate young lovers commit suicide together in pairs, or separately one at a time. This steady massacre, inspired by love, which has been going on for centuries, has surely cost more lives than the many pestilences and catastrophes which have ravaged the country, and the wars fought on Italian soil.
>
> Money, honour, prestige, politics and the desperate struggle for power or survival also exact their daily human sacrifices. Dismissed workers kill their employers; ruined businessmen kill themselves or their competitors; angry taxpayers kill the tax-collector; failed students kill their teachers; Mafia men kill their rivals, stool-pigeons, policemen and bystanders. Fascists kill Communists and Communists kill Fascists; rioting workers kill policemen and strike-breakers with stones, clubs, steel pipes wrapped in newspapers or stevedores' hooks; policemen kill rioting workers. Veteran Communist leaders are frightened by the violence of the younger men who, when called upon to stage a peaceful demonstration, smash everything in sight, overturn trams and cars, viciously beat up innocent bystanders, and get themselves senselessly killed.
>
> The world of vice also demands its daily victims. Street-walkers are found dead with silk stockings wound tight round their necks or

* Editorial Note: See George Urban's two interviews: *Survey* (No. 99, Spring 1976) and ENCOUNTER "A Conversation with Luigi Barzini" (May 1978).

[1] I wrote the book in English, and the Italian edition, *Gli Italiani*, appeared in a literally faithful translation by Bruno Oldera. I did not translate it myself, because some newspapers had challenged me to publish the identical text in Italian, without making any changes; and I was worried that if I had a hand in it I would, inevitably, take liberties with my own prose.

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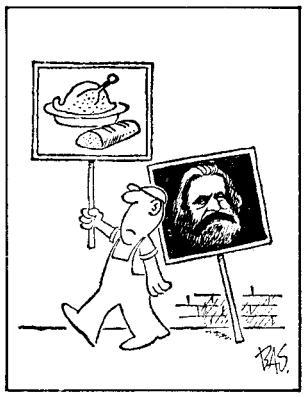
knives stuck in their ribs, on their unmade beds or in country lanes; fatherly homosexuals are found in public parks with their heads smashed in and pockets turned out; on deserted beaches, naked call-girls are found dead at dawn drowned in a few inches of water. Prostitutes kill their pimps, whom they usually primly call *"il mio fidanzato"*, my fiancé; pimps and dope-peddlers kill each other over territorial disputes. Thousands die every year in the most devastating and spectacular car crashes in the western world. Others die in train accidents. Then there are recurring earthquakes, floods, landslides, tidal waves.

AS FAR AS MY VIEW of the present situation is concerned, I should like to quote the book's conclusion:

> The Italian way of life cannot be considered a success except by temporary visitors. It solves no problems. It makes them worse. It would be a success of sorts if at least it made Italians happy. It does not. Its effects are costly, flimsy and short-range. The people enjoy its temporary advantages, to be sure, without which they could not endure life, but are constantly tormented by discontent. They rage against their fate today as they have always done. They have been on the verge of revolution for the last one hundred and sixty odd years, against kings, foreign dominations, the Church, disunity, landowners, capitalists, centralization in turn. All these, of course, at one time or another contributed something to the national ills. Politicians eternally tinker with laws and institutions. But the fundamental cause escapes everybody. It is the Italian way of life which makes all laws and institutions function defectively. It is the illusion of a solution, lotus-eating, the resigned acceptance of the very evils man has tried to defeat, the art of decorating, ennobling them, calling them by different names and living with them. The unsolved problems pile up and inevitably produce catastrophes at regular intervals. The Italians always see the next one approaching with a clear eye, but, like sleepers in a nightmare, cannot do anything to ward it off. They can only play their amusing games, try to secure their families against the coming storm, and delude themselves for a time. They console themselves with the thought that, when the smoke clears, Italy can rise again like a phoenix from its ashes. Has she not always done so? The tenacity and the eagerness with which the individual pursues his private interests and defends himself from society, his mistrust of noble ideals and motives, the splendid show, the all-pervading indulgence for man's foibles make Italian life pleasant and bearable in spite of poverty, tyranny and injustice. They also waste the efforts and the sacrifices of the best Italians and make poverty, tyranny and injustice very difficult to defeat.

MAY I ALSO POINT OUT, very gently, that these words were written about 15 years, when the alliance between the Christian Democrats and the Socialists had quite recently been formed, and was greeted joyfully by nearly everyone. It was then considered a brilliant solution, the cunning formula that could, once and for all, solve the country's main problems and definitely defeat the Communist threat to our fragile economic prosperity and our uncertain liberties.

Dr Hahnemann's Cure



EVERYONE KNOWS that asking a poet or a novelist to tell you what he truly meant in one of his works, or getting a politician —La Malfa or Fanfani, say—to explain the real reason for some incomprehensible decision, often results in confusion confounded. For writers are nearly always obeying some inner dream they are not entirely aware of, and politicians go by guesswork, compelled by complex motives, some of them indefinable and perhaps impossible to acknowledge, others secret through necessity, and others unknown to themselves and which may perhaps be discovered only by future historians.

A source of great confusion recently—indeed throughout all the post-War years—has been the interviews, writings, and public and private statements of Italian trade unionists (particularly Communist ones) and of "left-wingers" (some of them very far to the Left). If one took them seriously one would think they were not only fighting for a socialist change in society, for the abolition of private property and the market economy, but at the same time for the Public Good; for the development of industry and agriculture, for an increase in the number of jobs and a higher standard of living for the workers. All this (they either implied or stated explicitly) was scientifically based on the theories of Marx and Engels, if not on the practical instructions of V. I. Lenin.

But the reality is quite different. It was not Marx and Engels who inspired our trade unionists, but

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another great German thinker—Dr Samuel Hahnemann, who was born in Meissen in Saxony in 1755 and died in Paris in 1843, where he was buried in *Père Lachaise*. It is on his grave, and not that of Marx, that the most distinguished defenders of Italian working-class interests ought to place red carnations each year on the anniversary of his death.

His name is never mentioned in statements or interviews, for many reasons. His decisive influence has been kept secret, or is actually unknown to most people. Ask Lama, or Trentin, or Benvenuto, or Macario—or else Pajetta, Cossutta or Berlinguer—out of the blue: "Have you ever read the works of Dr Hahnemann?" and you will get the answer: "Hahnemann? Who's he?" However, it will become clear to the reader of these jottings of mine that only the illustrious Saxon doctor's doctrines can explain the constant behaviour of trade unionists and left-wing—including Far Left—parties over the past thirty years.

DR HAHNEMANN is taken to be the populariser of the theory that, in order to cure an illness, one must use the medicines or cures that can reproduce the symptoms of that illness in a healthy organism, and therefore make them worse in a sick person. The theory is not new. Basically it goes back to ancient times—to Hippocrates, Paracelsus, Galen. It was contained in the Latin formula *similia similibus curantur*. Hahnemann took it over, enlarged and enriched it, and spread it throughout the world. He began by noting that, for instance, quinine gave a healthy man the fever for which it was the remedy; that many of the medicines, massages, and baths needed by a patient suffering from lumbago gave lumbago to people without it and made it worse in those who already had it.

We need only watch trade-union politics, then, to realise that in spite of their Marxist-Leninist claims they have in fact been inspired purely by Dr Hahnemann. Some months ago, to give one example, large-scale strikes were proclaimed in all sectors in order "*to increase employment*." As we all know, the illness—unemployment—had been brought on by many factors, among which strikes were probably the most decisive. Pointless strikes, brought about with violence, and for diffuse political (not economic) reasons, had pushed the cost of labour up beyond the increase in productivity (which had in fact considerably fallen), had made exports drop, had increased the rate of inflation, had discouraged the creation of new businesses, had brought many industries to the point of collapse, and had made many foreign firms who could no longer work profitably in Italy, as well as many foreign residents, flee the country. In order to remedy (*similia similibus curantur*) the illness brought about by strikes, new strikes—more militant than ever—were called. The influence of Dr Hahnemann is clear.

THE SAME PROCESS can be seen in every other vital sector of Italian national life. One of our ills certainly was, and is, widespread ignorance, the lack of modernity, deficiencies in education, and inadequacy in our professional, managerial and technical classes. Anyone else would have hastened to reform, expand and modernise the institutes of higher education—universities, scientific laboratories, and polytechnics. But instead, once again obeying an ancient precept, our trade unionists and our students, inspired by the Left, soon set to work enthusiastically to dismantle and destroy the little there was, old and inadequate though it might be, without any thought of building up anything new.

The technical and managerial class was inadequate, numerically as well as otherwise, but everything possible was done to make our most serious and well-educated youngsters emigrate in droves—as well as many talented teachers, organisers, scientists and businessmen—to countries where they could work and prosper. Was there a lack of low-priced housing? Laws were passed that practically prevented any such new building. Was public order tottering, and crime triumphant? The police were asked to undermine their own discipline, and to disarm themselves; suspects were no longer allowed to be detained; every legal procedure was made as complicated as possible, and, at the same time, fanatical hatred was preached between parties, classes, and generations.

Were there (as is inevitable, alas, in every land) some judges who, sometimes unconsciously, interpreted the law in their own special way? The lower ranks of the judiciary were filled with young men who no longer obeyed the existing law at all, but only their own ideology and their own party line. Were governments weak and feeble? They were threatened, terrorised, and paralysed with political strikes, upheavals, riots and revolts. Was public spending threatening to swallow up the few resources of a poor country? Under irresistible pressure wasteful state spending and unproductive handouts increased immeasurably year by year. And so on.

SIMPLE SOULS who do not happen to be followers of Dr Hahnemann's doctrine know that instead of pouring petrol on a fire, one ought to pour water; that instead of printing tons of new bank notes and distributing them like publicity hand-outs, expenditure must be cut in order to save public funds; that instead of discouraging savings, investment, production and exports, and thus decreasing

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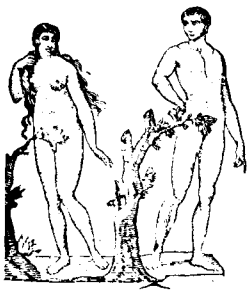
the number of jobs, these things should all be encouraged and businessmen should not be terrorised. Does all this seem easy? It isn't. See, for instance, the howls of rage and the accusations that recently greeted Lama when he tried to show the validity, in the present world, of a militant motto which our old revolutionaries (who had not yet studied Hahnemann) used to write on all our Italian walls in days gone by: *"Chi non lavora non mangia* (Those who don't work don't eat)."

"Imatiology"



I SHOULD LIKE to found a new scientific discipline, one of those today known as "interdisciplinary disciplines." It would overlap on to political, economic, military and cultural history, the history of customs and moral ideas, sociology, aesthetics, psychology, and a few other branches of knowledge. I fear, however, that by now it would be rather difficult for me to deepen my knowledge of all these sufficiently.

I lack enough time, free of everyday occupations; I lack serenity in these turbulent times, and would seem to lack it in the years ahead of me, before the end. So I must be content to throw down these few rough hurried notes, like a man writing a message to drop into the sea in a bottle, in the hope that some unknown young academic will pick them up and develop them methodically and diligently, and thus achieve fame and distinction in academic circles.

THE DISCIPLINE would be called *imatiology*, from "*imatios*", clothes. It would consist of a systematic search for connections between the development of events and the physical aspect, general appearance, and clothes of their contemporaries—in the hope that one day laws, or working hypotheses, would be established that would allow the future, in some way or another, to be foretold. Like all branches of science (i.e. meteorology), *imatiology* has been preceded by ancient popular beliefs, some of which were revealed as mere unfounded superstitions, and others of which were possibly intuitive forecasts.

One of the latter was certainly the obvious, proverbial idea of the *collet monté*, that is, that a stiff high collar is accompanied by moral strictness, severe administration, discipline, firmness, and a degree of unintelligence. Very high stiff collars, pleated in the Spanish manner, were introduced into Italy by Charles V and his courtiers in 1530, the year in which the glorious, many-coloured nonsense of the Renaissance ended, and a stifling new régime began.

The Spaniards also introduced the invariable black suit, then called by Campanella "traitorous black." In the 19th century black was the colour of the middle-class suit, at least after 1830. The Fascist shirt and uniform were also black. Very high collars were worn, some years later than Charles V, by Queen Elizabeth and her courtiers in order to best the Spaniards, rule the waves, conquer the colonies, and establish the Empire.

It was the 19th century that wore the highest collars in history, at least at the outset. Those of Napoleon's marshals—but not his own—were very high indeed. Later, it was not merely the most serious and responsible men who adopted them—statesmen, scientists, educators, philosophers, engineers, financiers, generals and industrialists—but also the anonymous middle and lower-middle classes (clerks, accountants and schoolmasters), who all wore increasingly high collars that went up to their ears and beyond, made of starched linen with bands wrapped round them several times.

IT WAS NOT BY CHANCE that the highest collars of all were those of Monsieur Joseph Prudhomme, a mythical character ("the very image of self-satisfied, magisterial nothingness, of majestic silliness"), a symbol of his time who, among other things, said: "Napoleon was ruined by ambition. If he had been content to remain a plain artillery officer, he would still be on the throne. . . ." Prudhomme is always shown with collars that hide his ears completely and actually reach his temples.

In these same years there were also ever-widening collars, soft and open collars from which the bare neck emerged, but these were worn only by eccentrics, poets, and artists of irregular habits, musicians and revolutionaries; Baudelaire, Wagner, Balzac, Poe, the Impressionists, Paganini, Bakunin, and, at the end of the century, Oscar Wilde.

Gradually, as the century advanced, moral inflexibility and flawless certainty declined, and collars became lower and gradually softer. Compare the uniform coat collar (which covered the starched high collar beneath) of Charles Albert, with the low, wide, comfortable one of his son Victor Emmanuel. Compare the very high coat-collars of Prince Bismarck and the Prussian soldiers of 1870 with those of Napoleon III and his generals. Compare the high, hard collars of the historical Right with the low soft ones of the Left after 1876 (and, later, the very low ones worn by

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Giolitti). The last 19th-century collar was worn, you might say, by Herbert Hoover, who faced the terrible crisis of 1929 with the inflexible ideas of the previous century.

IN THE First World War the only people who abolished the closed coat-collar and wore an open-necked jacket were the British officers. Perhaps this was a warning sign of the imminent decline of the idea of Empire. It was no coincidence that the New York City police were the scourge of the gangster underworld while they wore closed coat-collars, and that as soon as they were given open-necked jackets at the end of the 1920s they became weak and corrupt; not to mention the further decline when, later still, they were actually allowed to appear on the streets in their shirt-sleeves. It is important to note that the Soviet generals and marshals opened their Russian jackets with relief, and exhibited their soft shirt-collars and ties, only after the death of Stalin.

LESS OBVIOUS is what happened to skirts and trousers. Trousered barbarians were always subjugated by the Romans in short skirts. The kilted Scots were never really defeated by the English. Men in long skirts (Italians, dignitaries of the Renaissance, ecclesiastics, Mandarins of the Chinese empire) were aware of their own indisputable dignity, which they defended firmly, being dominant in society. They became weak—like clergymen, or Catholic priests who have recently taken to dressing like clergymen—as soon as they took to trousers.

The question of the woman in trousers could also be studied in depth. There is no unambiguous interpretation. Chinese and Turkish women have worn trousers for centuries, although they have occupied servile, subservient, humble positions. American women dominated society, reduced their husbands to servitude, and were successful in male careers even in the days when they invariably wore skirts.

It would be more interesting to be able to establish mathematical formulae linking the shortening of women's skirts with the coming of great historical crises; and their lengthening on the eve of periods of renewal and moral reconstruction. They rose, as we know, above the knees in the second half of the 1920s (when no one had yet forecast the collapse of the world economy); and then they lengthened again in the '30s. They shortened (not much, admittedly) a little before the Second World War, and lengthened ("*New Look*") immediately after it, foretelling years of severity and hard work; and once again were shortened to an unprecedented degree ("*mini-skirts*") a few years ago, at the end of the 1960s and the beginning of the '70s, before the wave of anarchy that swept across the world.

The link between personal appearance and the political climate is so close that, on the Far Left in Italy, ill-cut clothes, untidy hair, and untrimmed beards have today taken the place of thought, logic, and ideology. On the other hand, the invention of "Euro-Communism", no longer connected with the barricades, was foretold immediately after the War by Togliatti's faultless double-breasted suit and Amendola's Foreign-Office hat. (In the centre of the political line-up, Bozzi's beard no doubt costs his party thousands of votes, since it gives the mistaken impression that the liberal outlook has stood still since the days of his great-grandfather.)

MANY USEFUL *imatiological* observations can be made by close observation of the television screen. A few years ago, when it had to be shown that political power, culture and the national TV service had now definitely passed to the Catholic-Marxist proletariat, honest souls were to be seen on RAI naïvely disguised as flood victims, or prison lags, or escaped convicts.

They were unkempt and tieless, with a week-old growth of beard, their hair carefully uncombed, their clothes obviously bought from a pedlar, and crumpled as if the wearer had spent the night (in summer) sleeping under a bridge or (in winter) crouched by a bonfire of old car-tyres. This sort of disguise was, in any case, a crude insult to the working class—the workers I happen to know, when they aren't at work, are washed, combed, and dressed in decent, often elegant, clothes.

Similar pseudo-tramp-like figures are still seen, for obvious reasons, on the second TV channel. The Communists, on the other hand, seeking to reassure the more fearful members of the public, faithfully follow Togliatti in their *imatiology*, and disguise themselves more and more to look like Swiss bankers or oil-company executives. They have even managed, in their pursuit of long-term aims, to make Enrico Berlinguer damp down and comb his unruly locks, at least on important occasions—as when, for instance, he speaks in the Kremlin, and is televised for the whole world.

It seems to me rather difficult, today, to make any forecasts about the confused situation in Italy, in the West, or in the whole world, without any solid scientific base on which to make them. Whatever are we to deduce, for instance, from things which have no precedent in history—such as priests and soldiers in mufti, old men and ageing women dressed as adolescents, and females (often young and attractive, but also mature and withered) appearing bare-breasted in public? Watch this space for the latest interpretations of imatiology.

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Concerto for Soloists

COME TO THINK OF IT, it is surprising that the Italian Symphony Orchestra—democratic, non-clerical, anti-fascist, the people's proud achievement of our time—didn't come into being years ago. After all, our universities, some of our best daily newspapers, including the *Corriere della Sera* and *Il Messaggero*, the largest of the state-owned industries and many public institutions, like the Venice Biennale, have all been running on such up-to-date lines for a very long time indeed.

Today the new Orchestra seems to us so consistent, modern and progressive, so well adapted to this historical period, and to the political, moral, sociological, artistic and—one must admit—economic conditions of our country, that one wonders how on earth it took so long to arrive.

The answer is obvious. The unregenerate forces of moderation for a long time sabotaged an innovatory reform that was not merely necessary but inevitable. The stupid fear of giving up archaic prejudices and outworn examples from earlier centuries—centuries of obscurantism, oppression and exploitation—as well as sacrificing many well-established, greedy, private interests, have unfortunately held us back for a very long time, in this as in so many other fields.

We ought not (proud though we may be, and rightly so, to inaugurate something new) to regret that no one outside Italy has understood us, in fact that all foreign so-called experts scoff and jeer at us. After all, those in the vanguard have always been impeded by envy and contempt. Many of our contemporaries always misinterpret the true meaning of a *rivoluzione*, a word which after all we coined.

LET ME SUMMARISE briefly what happened. It all began with the abolition of the conductor, who was replaced, by means of a law (voted through, as everyone will remember, by the combined forces of the Left and the Christian Democrats), by a steering committee. No longer would a leader, one man on his own, a dictator unsuitably dressed in archaic tails, wield a baton that sinisterly recalled the whip with which galley slaves were urged to row, and to row all together, and in time.

His place was taken, as you will remember, by a small group of elected trustees (thus ensuring pluralism), wearing overalls, who put into action the democratically expressed instructions of the participating orchestral players. This was the first step. But then they progressed as decisively as possible to break, once and for all, one after the other, the ancient chains that had bound players and, heaven knows why, had forced them to play the same music more or less together.

For the first time they played what each instrumental fraction, and often each individual player, felt like playing at the time. The horns, say, would play the *Gazza Ladra*, the clarinet the overture from *William Tell*, the bassoons a charming dance, the French horns *La Traviata*, the viola da gamba *La Bella Gigogin*, a saxhorn some bits of *Parsifal*, a tuba *The Barber of Seville*, and so on.

Finally they set up direct participation by the audience. Anyone who cared to could bring along from home (or hire on the spot) an instrument of his own choice, and play whatever he wanted, anything at all. Even people who couldn't play had the participatory right to try. No more discrimination. The effect was marvellous, and quite unpredictable. Among other things, it was never possible to say how many players would be there, or what sort of instruments they would play. Many stayed away for reasons of their own, some perhaps for health reasons; but it was impossible to check this because—quite rightly—it was forbidden to send a doctor to their homes to see. Many never turned up at all; it could be that some had died.

THE LACK OF A PROPER number of orchestral players made very little difference, though, because a very large number of them had been engaged—in fact, three or four times the number needed. They hadn't been chosen because they were thought able to play their instruments "better" than other musicians, as happened in the past. They were people chosen by the Musicians' Union with reference to many factors, in effect on the basis of their political beliefs, which really meant the Party they belonged to and the influential friends they had in the Party, the only party, the Communist Party.

Then there was—though I won't dwell on it—the reform of their salary structure and welfare arrangements. Salaries, linked to the price of gold and oil, stood at several odd million lire a month, and grew steadily. There were also vouchers, gratuities, bonuses, concessions, facilities, free tickets, special allowances, sickness benefits and old-age pensions (as in other industrial sectors, "old age" officially started at thirty-five); and the concertina-like lengthening of the so-called Working Year (now almost 14 months) kept being given a tail-end of extra days and weeks.

Many reactionary musicians, players who clung to their archaic, anti-democratic form of artistic presentation, emigrated. Some, who had been refused passports, crossed the mountain frontiers at night, lugging their instruments. These were the players whom the moderates stupidly thought "the

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best." Orchestras all over the world competed expensively to secure their services. But their flight was not thought a loss; it was widely considered an authentic *liberazione*.[1]

Thus, in the orchestral field, was born a new way of dealing with music, a new symphonic development. Art was identified with the masses, or what was left of them. As all the most up-to-date intellectuals admit, it was a great, definitive, and relevant step forward, much overdue.

[1] Thanks to the many reforms that had become law, and those imposed (sometimes with a measure of surgical violence) by the trade unions, sometimes with youthful arrogance by the better-informed *studenti*, many scientists considered eminent had already left Italy; so had many people of so-called high culture, able entrepreneurs, world-famous experts, skilled workmen, all of them quite unable to adjust in a truly modern climate. Huge amounts of savings had also left the country—thousands of billions of lire sent out clandestinely not merely by the panic-stricken rich but by modest folk persuaded that Italy was crumbling into ruin. No doubt about it, the country surely benefited from the loss of all this ballast.

Elegy

The way we are living,
timorous or bold,
will have been our life.
Robert Lowell,

the sill geranium is lit
by the lamp I write by,
a wind from the Irish Sea
is shaking it—

here where we all sat
ten days ago, with you,
the master elegist
and welder of English.

As you swayed the talk
and rode on the swaying tiller
of yourself, ribbing me
about my fear of water,

what was not within your empery?
You drank America
like the heart's
iron vodka,

promulgating art's
deliberate, peremptory
love and arrogance.
Your eyes saw what your hand did

as you Englished Russian,
as you bullied out
heart-hammering blank sonnets
of love for Harriet

and Lizzie, and the briny
water-breaking dolphin—
your dorsal nib
gifted at last

to inveigle and to plash,
helmsman, netsman, *retiarius*.
That hand. Warding and grooming
and amphibious.

Two a.m., seaboard weather.
Not the proud sail of your great verse. . . .
No. You were our night ferry
thudding in a big sea,

the whole craft ringing
with an armourer's music,
the course set wilfully across
the ungovernable and dangerous.

And now a teem of rain
and the geranium *tremens*.
A father's no shield
for his child—

you found the child in me
when you took farewells
under the full bay tree
by the gate in Glanmore,

opulent and restorative
as that lingering summertime,
the fish-dart of your eyes
risking, "I'll pray for you."

Seamus Heaney

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LETTERS

Toynbee's "Evensong"

IN "Evensong at Peterborough" (ENCOUNTER, October 1978) Philip Toynbee makes such a clear case against the ascription of "power" to God that one hopes the article will be widely read. The problem of evil, as he says, has bedevilled Christian thinkers at least from the time of Augustine. Why a God of love, able to prevent the world's suffering, should not do so has remained the great mystery. In order to explain the Incarnation Augustine felt he had to make God responsible for "matter" as for all else. Since his day theologians and liturgists have vied with one another in efforts to express the almightiness of God in words. But both Hume and Mill showed that an omnipotent God is a contradiction in terms and, more recently, Whitehead and Hartshorne have pointed out that only a relative and changing God could be compassionate.

Mr Toynbee has good philosophical backing when he pleads for a God "who does not possess two distinct attributes called 'power' and 'love' but . . . whose power lies only and wholly in his love." He is also supported by common sense. "If I fear God because he can cast both soul and body into hell I fear not God, but a devil." Power as such can never be an object of reverence. Only power for good has a claim on the worshipper's attention.

But if we dispense with power in our thought of God there remains the task of defining the kind of "influence" or "effect" or "authority" love can exercise. How does a value like love produce results in nature, especially human nature? What is it that happens when we try to sensitise ourselves to it, feel its presence, make it operative in life? The problem is, of course, at least as old as Plato; but it seems to me that we can attack it with renewed enthusiasm if we follow Mr Toynbee's lead. His article does not rule out the possibility of looking for light beyond our own Christian tradition but at the same time does not give it the emphasis it deserves. The compassionate Buddha, for example, has much to tell us about the place of understanding and where wisdom is to be found.

Mr Toynbee says that the article is a "compression" of a much larger work called "A Marriage of Heaven and Earth." It is to be hoped that he will reconsider his decision not to publish the more complete statement.

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Shils' "Intellectuals"

PROFESSOR EDWARD SHILS is most interesting in his essay "An Age of Embarrassment" (ENCOUNTER, October). He says, for instance, ". . . most Western societies have changed in the direction of and under the influence of, the desires of progressive intellectuals." And "Governments have come forward to meet the demands of the collectivistic liberals and democratic socialists. . . ." But is this really so? It puts one rather in mind of Tolstoy's parable about the locomotive blowing off a fine head of steam which the watching peasant believes to be the power that pulls the train.

Surely the real dynamic of modern western politics is a combined drive, on the one hand for Party politicians to bribe mass electorates and on the other the unexampled prosperity of the last quarter-century which has provided the money for all our expensive public luxuries. This prosperity also provides further motives, somewhat more superficial than their unconscious ones, for the intransigence, the unappeasable demandingness, of intellectuals. They themselves resent anyone actually doing something rather than talking and playing politics; and more practically, they must disguise the source of public benefactions because if people notice where they in fact come from, then they cannot be presented as the *gifts* of politicians. This is why intellectuals are equally useful and employable to either a modern socialist or a modern conservative government; they fulfil the same function for either. That is first to make demands for bribes which the politicians can then supply and then to complain that more is needed. In this way the politicians can take more and more of the people's money off them to spend in ways that are under the control of politicians and not of private persons; this increases the control over the electorate while keeping the masses happy with what looks like gifts.

INTELLECTUALS are, thus, an essential factor in mass democracy; they supply the arguments that make what happens in politics respectable. What happens is that anyone or any institution which achieves anything, and therefore produces wealth, is robbed and hampered to provide the bribes that induce the electorate to vote for Snooks who has just—splendid fellow—announced the provision of State dowries to all newly-wedded couples, a month or so before an election. That actually happened in Austria a few years ago, the real reason being the increase of young couples living together irregularly: the married tend not only to be more stable but to be more easily checked for taxation. It looks like support for marriage, but has in fact increased the divorce rate. Altogether, the process may be more visible in a small society than a large one. Penal taxation and constant interference are the results of the process which gradually and inevitably reduces the production of wealth of all kinds, including imponderable kinds. The bribery, in turn, produces a populace with no responsibility for its own lives and therefore, again gradually and inevitably, a populace of irresponsibles. The vote-buying cannot be stopped because whoever even puts a brake on it is doomed to defeat at the polls, and therefore, so the argument runs, cannot get power to introduce reforms.

The only cure for the historical downward spiral would be a return to serious education so that ordinary people might understand something of public affairs and their own interests. Politicians and their tame intellectuals understand this very well. That is why both major Parties (and not only in Britain) have done their best to wreck public education at all levels in the last generation, as the dynamics of the process became clear to them. The intellectuals have worked manfully at this task, actively by praising the levelling down of school standards and passively by not publicising the results. The recent complaints about schools have come mainly from parents who see their children being turned into morons. Where

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the intellectuals have climbed on to the parents' small wagon, it is to demand yet more unresearched experimentation which must make still deeper ignorance and so make their masters' confidence trick easier.

This is not to suggest that intellectuals should not be taken seriously. They most certainly should be taken seriously, but not as Professor Shils does, flattering them by way of criticism. That only helps their own camouflage.

SARAH GAINHAM

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On Daring to Speak Its Name . . . .

Wilkinson's "Frisson"—By ROBERT GORHAM DAVIS

AS ONE WHO first found homosexuality treated in literature by Suetonius in his *Lives of the Caesars* and by Petronius in the *Satyricon*, I read with great interest in the September ENCOUNTER, L. P. Wilkinson's fourth article in his "Classical Approaches" series. But supported by the reference books and my own memories (I was an undergraduate at Harvard from 1925 to 1929) I must differ with him sharply about the date at which modern homosexuality emerged as an acceptable subject for public discussion.

Professor Wilkinson speaks of the "frisson" of surprise with which he encountered the word "homosexuality" in the London *Times* 25 years ago, and goes on to say that "it was then a subject hardly referred to in polite society or literature." The change began in England, he asserts, with court trials of 1953, followed by the appointment of the Wolfenden Committee the following year. He attributes the change in the United States to the "catalyst" of the Kinsey Report of 1948.

Actually the change occurred at least 25 years earlier, with Havelock Ellis preparing the way some 30 years before that.

Owing to the dubious character of the neologism itself, rather than to the inhibitions of the editors, the word "homosexuality" appears only in the Supplement to the *Oxford English Dictionary*. The first use cited was by Havelock Ellis before the turn of the century (*Studies in the Psychology of Sex*, 1897), but his footnote is also quoted: " 'Homosexual' is a barbarously hybrid word, and I claim no responsibility for it." He customarily used "invert" and "inversion." According to the OED, George Bernard Shaw (*New Statesman*, 1914) referred to the "forty tolerated homosexual brothels of Berlin", and Robert Graves (*Goodbye to All That*, 1929) observed that "In English preparatory and public schools romance is necessarily homosexual", a fact already made sensationally evident by Alec Waugh's *Loom of Youth* (1917). During the weeks following the publication of Waugh's youthful bombshell, the correspondence columns of newspapers were full of letters from anxious parents and from headmasters who protested that this might happen at other schools but not at theirs.

THE FIRST VERSION of *Studies in the Psychology of Sex* began as an equal collaboration of Havelock Ellis and John Addington Symonds, the Renaissance scholar, one of the first European admirers of Walt Whitman. A homosexual himself, Symonds had printed privately *A Problem in Greek Ethics* (1883), dealing—as does L. P. Wilkinson—with the theme of pederasty in Greek literature. Symonds persuaded Ellis to begin the *Studies* with a volume on homosexuality, and they proposed to advocate—this immediately after Wilde's imprisonment—the same kind of tolerance advocated by the Wolfenden Report sixty years later.

Symonds contributed his own case history and others provided by his friends; Edith, Ellis's wife, did the same on the Lesbian side. The German edition came out in 1896. After Symonds' sudden death his executors blocked English publication of the collaboration, so Ellis revised the volume to make it entirely his own. Because of difficulties with the English police and censorship over the first two volumes (1897 and 1899) the complete series of seven volumes was published only in the United States and by a medical firm, but with steadily heightening effect. Ellis became a kind of cult figure. (Random House republished the whole work for general circulation in 1936.)

DURING MY undergraduate days, however, the decisive influence came from France. The internationally recognised achievements of Gide and Proust made the theme of homosexuality so prominent that teachers and critics could hardly avoid discussing it. Gide, who received an honorary degree from Oxford in 1947, had published as early as 1924—though it was very badly received—a Platonic dialogue in defence of homosexuality, with the classical title *Corydon*. Proust's *Cities of the Plain* and Radclyffe Hall's *The Well of Loneliness*, with a preface by Havelock Ellis, were published in 1928. *The Book Review Digest* for that year shows that both in England and the United States these novels were reviewed dispassionately, with due regard to their very different worth, and with no attempt to conceal their central theme. Proust's treatment was explicit, exhaustive and almost scientific in tone; Radclyffe Hall's was inexplicit, romantic and propagandistic, trying to create in the general reader the sympathetic understanding that her introducer, Ellis, had advocated for so many decades.

SINCE I read English literature at Harvard, I read Gide and Proust on my own; but I took a course in non-dramatic Elizabethan literature where we naturally discussed works in which the Elizabethans, ardent classicists, translated and imitated the homoerotic poems to which Professor Wilkinson's article was devoted, and especially the Virgilian and Theocritan eclogues from which Gide took his title *Corydon*. I was startled at the effeminate ideal of male beauty described so extravagantly in Sidney's *Arcadia*, Marlowe's "Hero and Leander" ("Some swore he was a maid in man's attire"), and in Shakespeare's sonnets.

I remember being amused in class at what the instructor called the "subaqueous" passage in Marlowe's

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poem, where the amorous sea god Poseidon poses as great a threat to Leander as sharks do to long-distance swimmers in the Caribbean. Marlowe was accused of homosexuality, partly on the strength of such passages.

My instructors, a number of them homosexual (including, it was assumed, the editor of the New Variorum edition of Shakespeare's sonnets) gave due but not excessive attention to these matters. The homosexuals at Harvard in that period were not scandalous and flamboyant like their contemporaries in England, as described in Martin Green's *Children of Light*. They were taken for granted and not much discussed. My tutor was a homosexual; so was my principal teacher of writing, who later appointed me to his staff. But though I had also disturbed him by becoming a Communist, he remained a friend, and was largely responsible for my having an academic career in the difficult period of the 1930s.

In that decade a number of homosexuals concerned with American literature turned Left (as F. O. Matthiessen did at Harvard and Newton Arvin at Smith College). It was characteristic of the time that Arvin went further in claiming Whitman for Communism than Melville for homosexuality. When Hitler killed Ernst Röhm in 1934, there was explicit public discussion of the homosexuality of Röhm and his leftist Nazi followers. It removed any illusion that homosexuality was confined to the artistic and humane.

AFTER THE DARK EVENTS of the late 1930s and the outbreak of World War II, it would have seemed absurd to my generation that anyone could still get a "frisson" from the mere mention of this once-forbidden topic, even in the good grey *Times*.

ROBERT GORHAM DAVIS

Westport, Conn.
USA

AUTHORS

Masuji Ibuse was born in 1898; he is best known in the West for his novel *Black Rain* and for a collection of short stories, *Lieutenant Lookeast and Other Stories* (both published in 1971 by Secker).

Clive Sinclair taught for a year at the University of California in Santa Cruz after taking a degree at the University of East Anglia where he is now doing research on Yiddish literature. *The Brothers Singer*, his study of Isaac Bashevis Singer and Israel Joshua Singer, will be published by Allison & Busby in the autumn of 1979.

Theodore Draper is the author of a history of American Communism (2 vols, 1957, 1960); works on Cuba (1962, 1965); *Abuse of Power* (1967), on US policy in Viet Nam; and *Israel & World Politics* (1968); he has recently completed an historical analysis of America & World Power. Among his articles in ENCOUNTER is "Intellectuals in Politics" (December 1977).

Anthony Thwaite's poem in this issue is one of a sequence on which he is working, called "Victorian Voices." His most recent volume of poems, *A Portion for Foxes*, was published by Oxford University Press in 1977.

Stephen Toulmin is Professor in the Committee on Social Thought, University of Chicago. He has held Chairs in Philosophy at Michigan State University and at Brandeis, and was from 1960–64 Director of the Nuffield Foundation Unit for History of Ideas. Among his books are *Human Understanding* (Vol. I, Princeton University Press, Cambridge University Press, 1972) and *Knowing and Acting* (Collier Macmillan, 1976). His articles in ENCOUNTER include "Me Norman, You Saxon" (September 1978), and "Rediscovering History" (January 1971).

Ferdinand Mount is a political commentator (writing weekly for *The Spectator*) and novelist (his latest work of fiction, *The Clique*, was published in 1978 by Chatto & Windus).

Sir Harold Beeley was British Ambassador to the United Arab Republic from 1961–64 and 1967–69, and United Kingdom Representative at the Disarmament Conference in Geneva 1964–67. From 1969–75 he was Lecturer in History at Queen Mary College, University of London.

Michael B. Yahuda is Lecturer in International Relations at the London School of Economics and Political Science. His study of *China's Role in World Affairs* was published in 1978 by Croom Helm.

Golo Mann is the author of *The History of Germany Since 1789* (Chatto & Windus, 1968) and a biography of *Wallenstein* (André Deutsch, 1976). Among his many contributions to ENCOUNTER is his review of Joachim Fest's *Adolf Hitler*, "Hitler—for the Last Time?" (June 1974).

Helen von Ssachno is a correspondent for *Süddeutsche Zeitung* in Munich.

Luigi Barzini sat until recently as a Liberal member of the Italian Chamber of Deputies to which he was elected in 1958. From 1944–47 he was editor and publisher of *Il Globo* in Rome. His books include *Americans are Alone in the World* (1953), *The Italians*, (1964), *From Caesar to the Mafia* (1971), and *O, America!* (1977).

The editors regret that in the "Authors" section of the December 1978 issue, **Maurice Cranston**, who is Professor of Political Science at the European University Institute in Florence, was wrongly identified as its Director.

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London

COFFEE TABLE: Alistair Cooke's book about America has finally overtaken the price of the coffee tables it graces. A limited edition in what the publishers, Paradine, describe as "full morocco with hand marbled Cockerell endpapers and matching slip papers" has been produced. It costs £122. For that kind of money I would expect it to come complete with four legs, too. EVENING STANDARD

London

AWAITING DEVELOPMENT: Heard from a middle-aged American woman at Stonehenge—"Hasn't changed much since 1972, has it?"

DAILY TELEGRAPH

London

RADICAL CHANGE: *Last and least likely applicant for the editorship of the New Statesman is the entire staff of The Leveller, a non-aligned magazine of the far Left. These 19 souls, who describe themselves as journalists, teachers, students, planners, authors and active Socialists, point out that their own magazine is produced collectively and has no editor. If appointed to the NS, they would all edit the magazine.*

"It is a serious application", Tim Gopsill, one of the collective, told me. "We think we could make a very good job of running the New Statesman. Of course, the title would have to change immediately: it's sexist for a start. New Statesperson would be a step in the right direction." SUNDAY TIMES

New York City

BITING DEFINITION: Americans belong to more than 13,000 associations, including The American Society of Dowsers, The Society of Connoisseurs of Murder, and the International Academy of Accredited Twirling Teachers. The members are described in the 1977 edition of the Encyclopedia of Associations.

There is also a Polish dental association that identifies itself in its by-laws as being for dentists of Polish extraction. WASHINGTON POST

St Paul, Minn.

TABOO: The worst coffee in the Mid-West is served in the silliest coffee shop, in St Paul, Minnesota. On its bills you may read the inscription "please pay your service personnel". The word waitress, evidently, is taboo.

THE TIMES

Oxford

Q. & A.:—*Oxford is about to make a great break with an ancient tradition by introducing an Honours School of Ancient and Modern History.*

Until now, if you wanted to read ancient history at Oxford, you had to read Greats, which consisted of ancient history, and philosophy with due emphasis on Plato, Aristotle, and those other honorary Oxford dons. The man or woman reading Greats decided whether he or she was primarily an ancient historian or a philosopher; and excellence in the one discipline made up for mere competence in the other. The ancient historian who answered the question "Is this a question?" in one of his philosophy papers with the laconic reply "If it is, then this is an answer", went on to get his First because of his originality and knowledge about Pericles.

THE TIMES

London

DEFINITIONS: In the House, Mr Callaghan as Prime Minister is proving to be many of the things which his predecessor, Sir Harold Wilson, was widely said to be—but really was not [Frank Johnson writes].

Mr Callaghan is genuinely cunning. Such is his deviousness that he always knows the right moment at which to be straightforward. He also gives the impression that he is seriously engaged in the activity of politics, something which Sir Harold could never bring off.

Stravinsky (I think) said, in a most elaborate jibe, that "Richard Strauss is the Puccini of music." Well, James Callaghan is the Harold Wilson of politics.

DAILY TELEGRAPH

Tokyo

JAP: *In recent weeks Japanese newspapers have been bombarded with letters from readers angered by the British Press Council's ruling that the word "Jap" is acceptable in newspaper headlines.*

A few of the letters have agreed that "Jap" is not really derogatory, and perhaps even necessary when there is too little headline space for "Japanese." But most writers have expressed disgust that the British Press, 33 years after the war, is still resorting to "ugly propaganda."

They argue that the words "Jap" or "Japs" are filled with racial hatred and at best imply an arrogant sense of British superiority over the people of Japan. It is certain, that the offence is somewhat greater than the continued use of the word "Pommy" for the British in Australia or "Yank" for the Americans in Britain.

Those "Brits" in Japan who protest against the decision as anti-Japanese tend to take the view that the undignified word "Jap" is undeniably offensive to the Japanese nation.

One thing is now clear, however. The Japanese Press is tired of the continued protests. One newspaper concluded the latest batch of angry letters with the words:

"With these letters we would like to end the discussion of the 'Jap' question.—Editor."

DAILY TELEGRAPH

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TOTAL REVOLUTION in CAMBODIA

Why was such a brutal experiment undertaken? What is the intellectual background of the leadership of the Khmer Rouge? Lek Hor Tan writes his account of the Cambodian Revolution from first-hand experience.

Also in *Index on Censorship* no. 1/1979: 'My Friend Rudenko' by Grigorenko; 'Malawi's Censorship' by Victor Ndovi; 'Paraguay—Culture of Fear' by Ruben Bareiro Saguier.

Index on Censorship provides an outlet for banned manuscripts and reports—usually at first-hand—on threats to free expression. Published 6 times a year, it is distributed by Oxford Journals, Press Road, London NW10.

"I continue to find *Index* one of the finest journals in circulation"—ANDRÉ BRINK.

INDEX
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